FENCE

NUMBER THREE

NOVEMBER 199NINE

SHAKESPACE

Special feature on the indie sound of Roanoke

Music. Art. Greed. Insanity. Xmas.

Saucepans. Snakes. Lizards. Arse.

THIS MAGAZINE IS FREE – ARE YOU?

PARENTAL ADVISORY EXPLICIT CONTENT

Try Poster Size Color Prints!

1 Bring us your file on CD or disk (Zip™ or floppy).

2 Output your file on our oversize color printer.

3 Laminate or mount to create a big impression.

Let a co-worker help you make your big ideas even bigger.

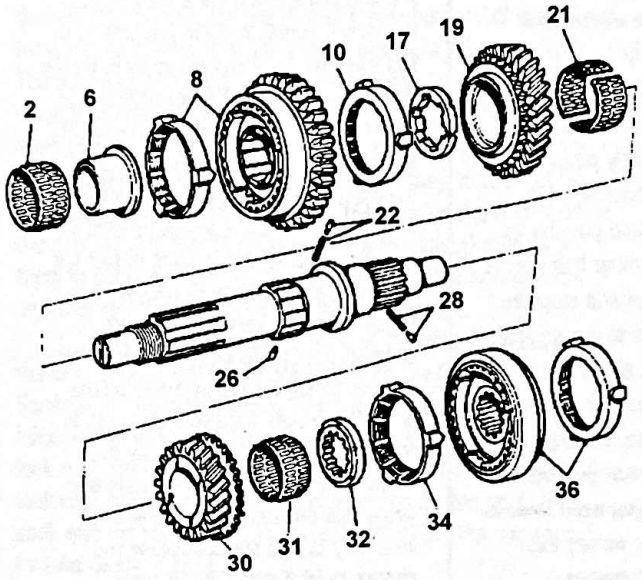
kinko's®

Express Yourself.™

2239 Colonial Ave. • Roanoke, VA 24015
(540) 344-5000 • Fax (540) 345-6588

CONTENTS

FENCE NUMBER THREE NOVEMBER 199NINE



Figuur 36: Hoofdasonderdelen

2 LETTERS
Real letters from real readers – keep 'em coming, send us more

6 SHAKESPACE
News, pictures and discography. Featuring Kent Moore's photography

8 FESTIVAL IN THE BAR
Report on the successful downtown fundraiser for No Phase artspace

10 ALBUM REVIEWS
Vince Eruptum reviews Chris Gaines, Ksine, Velvet Crush, and Shakespace

17 CALENDAR
Your guide to local and regional shows from now until you know when

19 WEBSHITE
Bobs Johnson tries to get the pills in the toilet before Elvis can eat them

21 RADIATION NATION
Elena DeRosa on health, greed and the telecommunications industry

22 HORACE
Fence exclusive – cartoon debut of Horace the happy consumer

26 CHRISTMAS
By Eve Rings – a short seasonal story to chill your black little hearts

28 LOVE AND LIMITS
Notwolf on why the Christian right wing does not own traditional family values

30 GOTHIC FANTASY
Featuring the poetry of Gar Girl, and the art of Notwolf

31 SAUCEPANHEAD
It's just another day for the philosophical superhero; plus those damn Index results

32 HAIR OF THE SNAKE
A potted history and cultural analysis of the boozer's friend – the lethal snakebite

34 GENUINE LIZARD
More visceral verse from the white trash garage poet laureate of Texas

36 ARSE IMITATES LIFE
Turn on, tune in, get real. Darth Brooks is dead, long live Wile E. Peyote.

BLISTER YER KNICKERS

FENCE COMMENT

By **Plato Shrimp**

I don't think there's much point in making any comment here. This Fence speaks for itself. And what a Fence it is. This editor could weep tears of joy at the fine quality of the work in these pages. And at the quantity of work – we've added eight pages since the last issue, thanks mainly to advertisers who believe in supporting us (and no thanks to those who don't). Half the issue is dedicated to local music and arts – we are particularly pleased to feature Shakespace, possibly Roanoke's best band and possibly its best kept secret. The other half covers creative writing and general stupidity. This mix is pretty close to our original conception of FENCE, and we can't thank this issue's contributors enough for helping us get there. But there is no reason that we cannot get even bigger and better. All you need to do is remember one thing – we are the medium, you are the message.

Talk is Cheap

A friend just showed me a copy of your magazine, Fence, and I'm just writing to say that I am truly impressed by it. By the content, by the layout (especially by the layout), by the irreverent but intelligent sensibility . . . by lots of stuff. You may have already received a few letters with lines like, "Roanoke's always needed a mag likes yours," but in point of fact it's the truth, and a bunch of people yabbering those very lines doesn't diminish that. (If no one's said anything like this so far, then allow me to be the first.) I especially liked your thoughts in "Arse Imitates Life." There really does seem to be no shortage of people who whine that this town sucks, to whom I invariably say, "It sucks because you choose to let it suck," or "It sucks because you haven't gotten off your behind and taken a look at what's around here." Anyway, enough ranting. The issue I got hold of was Volume 1, Issue 2. I haven't got through all of it, but I've seen enough to want to send an email as encouragement. Keep up the good work. I look forward to your next issue, and in the meantime I'll be sure to talk you up to all the good citizens I know.

Jeff Mahoney
Via the internet

Praise we like. Encouragement we like. Ranting we like. But what we really like is the idea of enthusiastic Fence readers bothering "good citizens" on our behalf. No Jeff, you keep up the good work. – Ed.

Good ol' Bigotry and Pornography

I recently wrote a response to an article in the Roanoke Times, but did not hear back from them, and I can only guess that they didn't like what I had to say. Or perhaps they didn't get it. I should have known their staff was innocent of wit. I submit my response to you, then, after having enjoyed Fence #2 very much. I take peace in the fact that, if I am once more rejected, it will at least have been done by better hands. This was my response:

The Day I Found Happy-ness

I was glad to see Mary Bishop's recent feature in the Roanoke Times on Happy's flea market, but I noticed that her article left out some of the down-home merchandise I find most charming about the place. I can still recall my first trip to Happy's – a search for Lynyrd Skynyrd records and a NASCAR t-shirt. Like most people who go there, I was tired of paying top dollar. It was a slow Tuesday afternoon when I strolled into Whitey's knife store, seduced by the natural lighting and rich aroma of boxed popcorn. My mouth fell open when I entered and saw the variety of tempting goods - the tools, the knives, the camouflage. I felt like a kid in a toy store, but I also remembered that I had limited funds, and until I had a job there would be no shopping sprees.

I went to the shirts, and gazing at them I knew my decision would be tough. So many colors, so many clever sayings, so many likenesses of Jeff Gordon and the Dale. Then I spotted a shirt without cars or numbers. It showed a man wearing a white sheet, with a burning cross behind him and a baseball bat in his hand. It read, "The Original Boys in the Hood." So the Klan had found a home at Happy's, had they? You can imagine my shame. I had been driving all the way to Floyd for my racist gear, wasting my grandmother's money on gas, when Happy's had everything I wanted, and right here in Roanoke! Needless to say, my desire for a racing shirt slowed to second place, and I bought the KKK shirt. They even had my size, XXXXXL.

Next I headed for the record store, forcing myself not to stop at the almost-crowded snack emporium. I had just located the "S" box when I spotted the flannel curtain. An old-fashioned, black-magic-marker-on-cardboard sign was attached to it: "21 and over ONLY!" I slipped inside. At first I thought the boxes were full of plain old videos, but as I watched a mustachioed man turn his head and leave the room, I figured there must be something special about these movies. I was right. No wonder this place is called Happy's, I thought. After several return visits, I can say with confidence that the porno at Happy's is among the most affordable in town.

For the life of me, though, I can't figure out why Mary Bishop left these treasures out of her article. I mean, sure, the pictures of NASCAR driver Alan Kulwicki, which increased in value after his death, deserved mention in her Good Deals Galore section, but so does my collection of Santa Claus porn. Shoot, a friend of mine already offered me ten dollars for a tape that only cost me a buck-fifty (it was "the low-low price"). Of course, my friend's offer only proves that not everyone possesses the Happy's spirit. Brushing Dorito crumbs and tissues from my Ku Klux Klan shirt, I belched and said, "No deal, partner, that sex tape is more than just cheap thrills to me . . . it's priceless." Then I quoted Mary Bishop at him: "It may be plain, and it may be homely. But it works."

Andy Reaser
Roanoke

BLISTER YER KNICKERS

Fence gets Rave Reviews from Top Poet

(10:57pm, beer (32oz cans) #4, big fat *[can't read this word – ed.]* #1)
Damn fine looking zine my man, hell yeah! You guys are bad ass.

What's your press run? If I was to send you a bunch of my catalogs, would you slip them in w/the zine. That way I might have a chance to make some money out of this deal. I don't have any other job for money. My writing tries real hard to support me. I'm open to any/all ideas. Feel free to reprint anything that I send (art, photos, etc.)

Like I already said. Damn fine looking zine. Me be proud to be in there.

Pop a top
William Massey
Texas

We be proud, too. It is our great honor to have the garage poet laureate of Texas as a regular contributor. See pages 34-35 of this issue for more of Mr. Massey's gruesome genius, and for details on how to order his art and writing – ed.

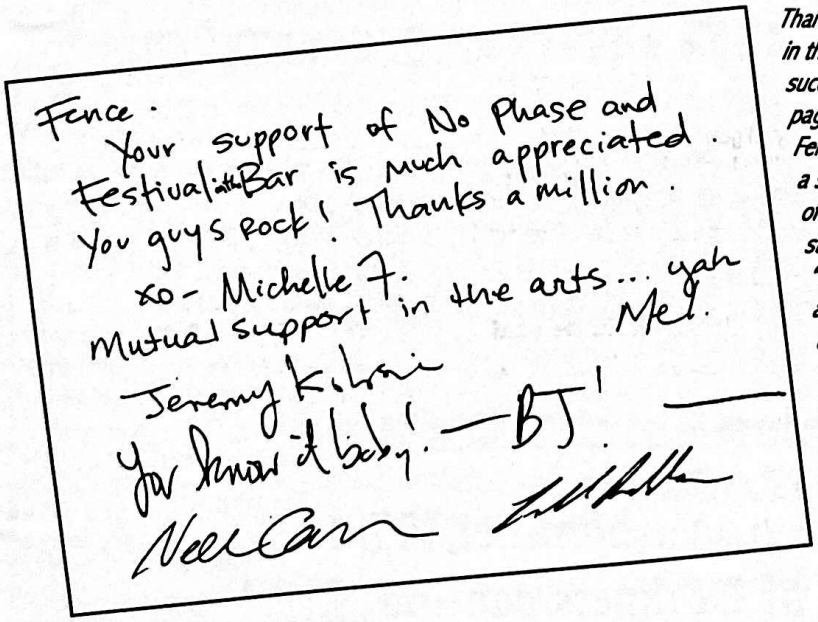
Trick or Trick

I was so happy when Halloween came round again - Yay! I love it, and on the day I enjoyed it as much as I could because I knew it would soon be over for another year. Then on to the more depressing holidays, like the festival rememberance of our treacherous treatment of the Indians that we all like to call Thanksgiving. And don't forget the wonderful time that we all have when it's Christmas, when people don't like you if you don't give them the most expensive gift. Then after new year's everyone's credit card bills come rolling in from where they tried to get 50 people the most expensive gift, and now they're starving because the new fad diet they're on (new year's resolution) only allows them to eat lettuce and tuna, and they're used to holiday food, and they're cranky because they quit smoking too.

I don't remember the point of that little rant, but it made me realize just how much I really do like Halloween (or Samhain, pronounced so-wen, which is the pagan new year) because the thing about Halloween is that you dress up till you look cool, then you go out and you strut your stuff and you go, "I look cool, give me some candy," or if you're 21 you go, "I look cool, give me some beer." How great is that? And for the record, I'll take candy or beer.

Antoinete Volley
Roanoke

We're glad to hear you managed to have a good time despite the laughable shenanigans pulled by the City of Roanoke. By the way, did anybody else see that poor fool on the news claiming that Halloween was the devil's birthday? Sounds like too much beer and candy to us. – ed.


Fence.
Your support of No Phase and Festival in the Bar is much appreciated.
You guys rock! Thanks a million.
xo - Michelle 7.
Mutual support in the arts... yah
Mel.
Jeremy Kilbride
You know it baby! —BJ!

Thanks, No Phase. Festival in the Bar was a big success (see report on pages 8 and 9), and Fence was pleased to be a small inebriated part of it. The crucial statement in this note is "Mutual support in the arts." This is a big part of what will ultimately make No Phase and Fence successful, as it will other ventures dreamed up by those dissatisfied with Roanoke's conservative culture. – Eds.

FENCE

ISSUE NUMBER 3
NOVEMBER 199NINE

EDITORS
BOBS JOHNSON
WILE E. PEYOTE
PLATO SHRIMP

CONTRIBUTORS
ELENA DEROSA
EVE RINGS
GAR GIRL
PLANET KT
VINCE ERUPTUM
WILLIAM B. MASSEY III
SLEEPING BOBBIE
NOTWOLF
ANTOINETTE VOLLEY
JEFF MAHONEY
ANDY REASER
DOGBOLTER
PLATO SHRIMP
BOBS JOHNSON
WILE E. PEYOTE
BATHIA
RIP
MEGAN STRATTON
G. ROWAN OAKS
SHAKESPACE
NO PHASE ARTSPACE

PHOTOGRAPHY
KENT MOORE

WEBMASTER
THE ATOMIC LIVER
xoom.com/members/fencemag

PRINTED BY
KINKO'S (BIG THANKS)

FENCE IS FREE TO THOSE WHO CAN AFFORD IT. WE MAKE NO MONEY FROM PUBLISHING IT, IN FACT WE LOSE IT. HAVE SOME RESPECT FOR COPYRIGHT. WE'VE TAKEN STUFF FROM OTHER SOURCES, AND WE CREDIT THOSE SOURCES WHEREVER POSSIBLE. PLEASE DO THE SAME IF YOU GET THE URGE TO COPY STUFF FROM THIS ISSUE OF FENCE.

COPYRIGHT 199NINE

PUBLISHED BY CONTENT OVER PLOT
POB 19136, ROANOKE VA 24019
FENCEMAG@XOOMMAIL.COM

EN GARDE!

Lonely?
Bored?

Try killing something!

It's more fun with more people.

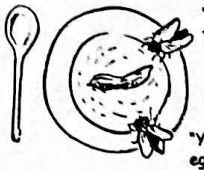
Roanoke Hobbies

7629 Williamson Road, Suite 2
540.777.4856

Featuring weekly Battletech, Warhammer, Wh40K,
AD&D, and World of Darkness gaming
Home of the White Peregrine Clan of the RPGA

BLISTER YER KNICKERS

Waiter, there's a Turd in my Soup



That Wait Hate in the last issue was right on the money. Why are people so rude, anyway? I thought you might like to hear of my experience at the hands of some "cretins", as Sandi Clam described them.

It was an ordinary Saturday evening, I was down to one table and the night was coming to a close. My last table consisted of one couple and a third wheel. I glanced at my watch, 10.20pm, and sauntered back to tell them the kitchen would be closing in ten minutes, and that if they wanted to place a dinner order they need to do so promptly. With the orders placed in the computer and salads and bread upon the table a strange thing began to happen. (And this is where my evening began to turn to shit, literally.)

I was cleaning the adjacent table when I noticed the floor was wet. No big deal, you may say, somebody probably just spilt their vodka and tonic. But the water was rising fast, and was accompanied by a slimy white film. As I left to tell someone higher up the chain of command about our little problem, there was a demand from the third wheel for another glass of Merlot. I had graciously accepted her demand when I noticed that her purse was on the floor. I explained to her that the soda and ice machines were right behind the wall of their table, and that one must have burst a pipe because there was a significant amount of water on the floor, and she might want to move her purse (I knew this was a lie, and that in reality the sewer pipe had burst, but I was trying to avoid panicking them).

After a few minutes, with wine glasses refilled and salad plates removed, I heard, "Where's our food?" I put down the mop I had been putting to good use, lied again about the water problem, and asked if they would prefer moving to another table. The third wheel refused. As I stood in inch-high water, I could not help but wonder why.

By now there were 9 or 10 employees around my table armed with mops and buckets, and with operational wet vacs that made it sound like a jumbo jet was landing on the restaurant roof. Filled with dread at what was to come, I left the kitchen on my mission to tell my table there would be no more food. While the third wheel was hurling obscenities at me, I looked down and – there it was – a piece of shit (really). Taking management into my own hands, I told them if they left now, their appetizers, five glasses of wine, and salads would be on the house. Incredibly, the reply was: "No, we want our dinner."

Enter management. My boss explained that there was a problem that couldn't be fixed immediately, but the third wheel still demanded food. With a polite, sarcastic smile he restated the offer I had made, and said, "There will be no more food this evening." This was too much for the third wheel, who became incandescent with rage, rose to her feet, and yelled even more. In her hysteria she knocked her purse onto the floor. When she picked it up, it came with a piece of the slimy white film attached. It was at that point that she realized that the white film was toilet paper, and a muffled cry escaped her lips.

Instead of fleeing because they realized they were surrounded by raw sewage, things got weirder still. The third wheel actually took the time to fill out a comment card, on which she proclaimed her discontent with our establishment (particularly its cleanliness). She thrust it into my hand as she scurried for the front door, ranting and raving the entire time that we were "going to fucking pay" for her "fucking Gucci purse that cost $179."

On my way outside to smoke a cigarette, I checked my empty table in the vain hope that they had left me a tip, wondering all the time how the hell someone could get to be so bitchy, snotty and dumb.

Sleeping Bobbie
Roanoke

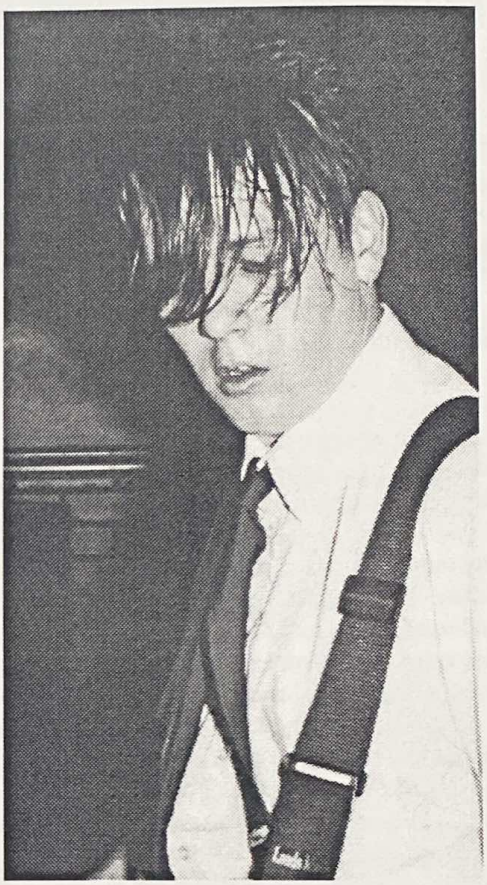
memory:
5 and a third

by
megan
stratton

i don't even live here anymore
but it's still some sort of home to me
every time i step into their house
my body fails and slips away
she makes me want to cry
but what she doesn't know won't hurt her.
everything is a memory
it cannot be escaped.
my feet grow colder
with every step i take.
i pull the tweed collar against my neck
tweed reminds me of a book i once read
the coat of a girl who loved me once
the cold of every winter past.
this town is everything and nothing.
ripped jeans with safety pins
bought at wal-mart
with this same discman
outside of this store
even the same month
but a different day and time.
green chai...
more memories lie within
sweating in the streets of pittsburgh
hot chai hot weather, ali too.
winter in summer.
sometimes i wish i could escape
all the memories that lie within
sometimes they're all i have to hold on to.

SHAKESPACE

Michelle Ferguson
Shakespace Fender-bender and real live rock goddess

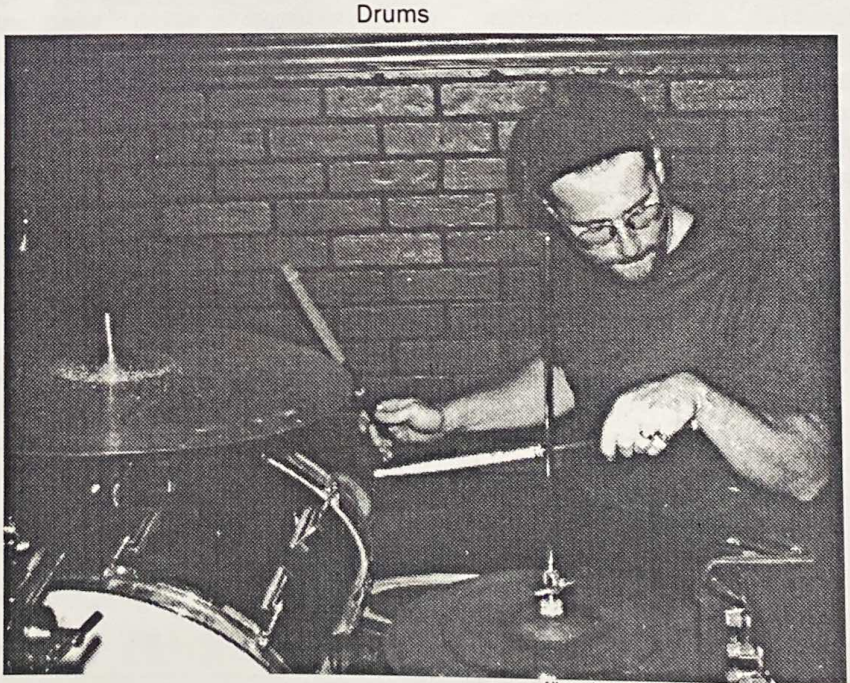


Josh Strawn
Guitar and vocals

Shakespace, seen here performing at Festival in the Bar, release their new EP, *Air Sign Orange*, on December 4. It features four guitar-driven songs produced by Ted Comeford (Hollows producer) and Mitch Easter (who has produced such indie rock luminaries as Pavement, Ride and REM), and three electronic remixes produced by Ksine and Josh Strawn.

Jeremy Kolosine
Vocals, guitar, synth

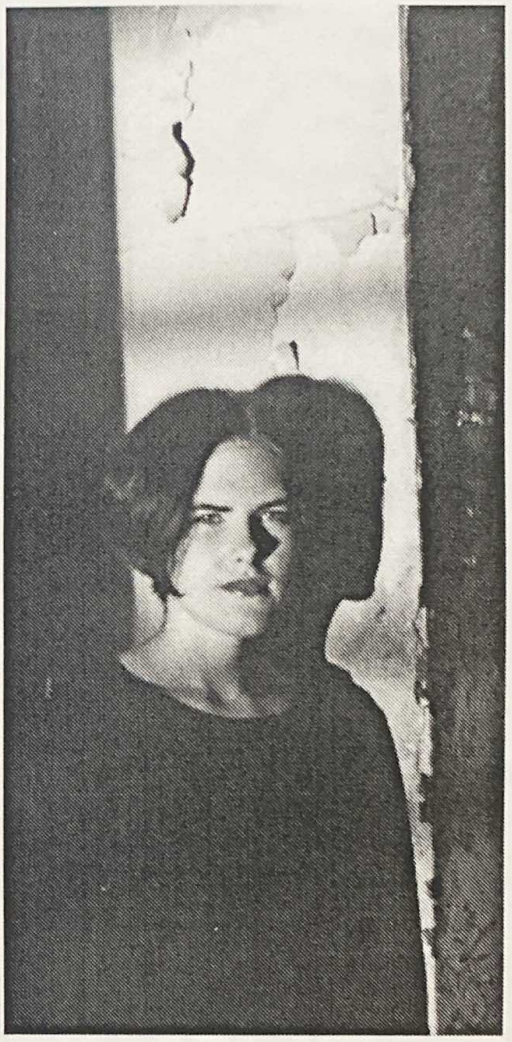
Marty Bensinger
Drums



All words and photos this page by Mr. Shrimp

SHAKESPACE

Fence Exclusive Sneak Preview! The photos on this page (and on the cover) were taken by Fence snapper Kent Moore, upstairs at Billy's Ritz, the former hotel and brothel in downtown Roanoke. Photos from this shoot (we're not sure yet which ones) will be used as artwork for the CD liner to *Air Sign Orange*.



Shakespace has also generated several side projects. Kolosine has just released Ksine, which features all Shakespace members plus ex-Shaker Ian Lloyd and goth DJ Bobby Bailey. The band is also on two upcoming compilations – *Notes from Home*, released by Delusion Records, and a local compilation for TAAPs. Ferguson and Strawn have remade "Boys" by 80 popsters The Book of Love, for the Moby-produced soundtrack to the movie "Porno". Strawn, who apparently never sleeps, is also guitarist for local pop stars The Diplomats. Kolosine plays synth on another project, Mushroom Clowns, which also features Bensinger on electronic drums, plus Kelly on cello, and goth DJs Bobby and Chris on electric drums and sampler. Ian Lloyd's new venture, Space Station Zebra, featured on the line up at Festival in the Bar.

Discography

Shakespace
(NPCD-001; 1999)
Dream Alone (Ksine Remix), Seas On Glass, Mean (Jaded Mix), 4/360, Already No, Mean, Paper Plane/Flimmer, Window, Cold Turkey, Already No (Remix), Dream Alone, Pills, 4/360 (Minimalist), Cold Turkey (dBellavibrio Mix), Mean (Love Boat), Paper Plane (Crash Mix)

Live at WUVT
(not released; 1998)
Already No, Paper Plane, Seas On Glass, Window, Flimmer, Zira, 4/360

Shakespace
(self-released; 1998)
Pills, Dream Alone, Cold Turkey, Mean

Shakespace is also on mp3.com (mp3.com/shakespace): "Window" went to #2 on mp3's international art rock charts; "Luv Boat" was a 1999 mp3 release.

FESTIVAL IN THE BAR

Kara O'Caen's Irish Pub
Saturday, September 11, 1999
Benefit for NoPhase artspace

The Diplomats
Hotplate
Shakespace
T-Groove
Tribe of Clouds
Vim Vigor Vitality
Stewart
Space Station Zebra
Wyld Stallyns
Joe Henry

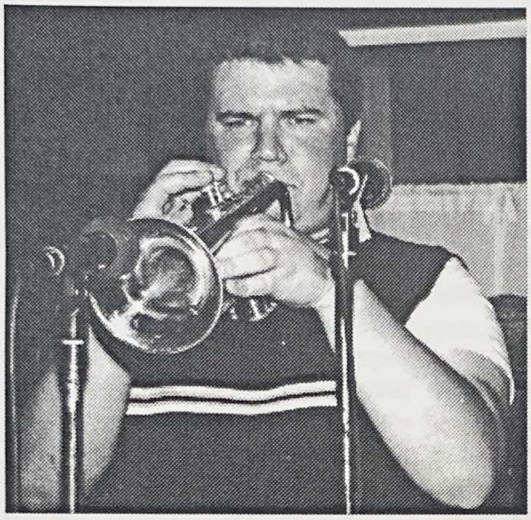
By Plato Shrimp

Festival in the Bar was a huge success.

The event raised more than a thousand dollars for No Phase artspace, and moved the art collective several steps closer to establishing a base in downtown Roanoke.

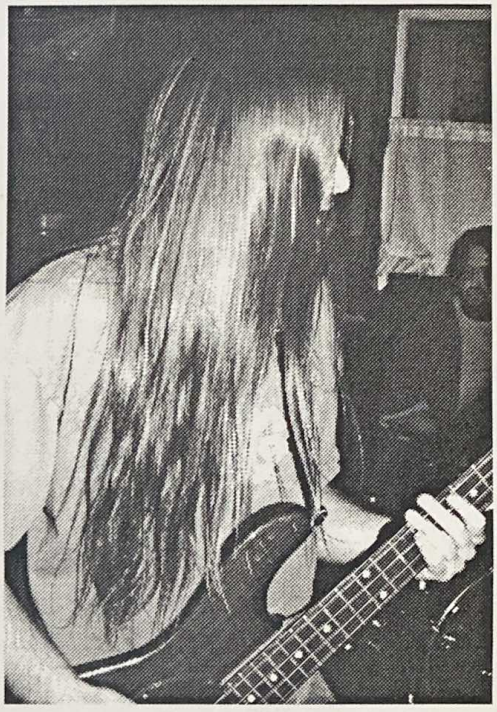
The last incarnation of No Phase, on Salem Avenue in downtown Roanoke, closed its doors almost a year ago. Since then the non-profit collective has struggled to find a permanent exhibition and workshop space, thanks primarily to attempted rent gouging by a few greedy downtown landlords. The good news is that, thank to Festival in the Bar, No Phase is financially stronger, and able to make more progress in setting up a permanent home. Even more encouraging is that, as this issue of Fence went to

NO PHASE



Left-hand page
Lower left: **T-Groove**
Lower right: **Stewart** (their last show, but now reformed virtually intact as **Nervous Lolly**)
Upper right: **Thee Diplomats**

This page
Lower left: **Wyld Stallyns**
Right: **Tribe of Clouds**
Upper left: **Scott from Vim Vigor Vitality**



Wanna write for Fence? We want to review local shows, but when we go to a gig we're always way too busy (drinking, playing pool, snogging), so if you know yer music and can write, we want to hear from you.

press, the No Phase directors were negotiating renting a space on Kirk Avenue.

Just because No Phase currently does not have a place of its own does not mean that the artists who exibited at the original No Phase (a weekend show in September 1997), and at the second NoPhase on Salem Avenue, have gone away. "They're waiting for NoPhase to open again," said NoPhase board member Michelle Ferguson. No Phase artspace is currently showing work at Bacchus Grill (see panel on this page for details). The featured artists are Nell Carr, Collin Daiber and Tom Dorathy.

Since its inception in 1997, No Phase has featured the work of more than 30 local artists, and has received local radio and press coverage. The No Phase board of directors is more optimistic than ever that the No Phase artspace can establish itself permanently. Board member Will Hunt told Fence: "Support in the area is much more substantial than it was, and our whole approach is more professional. We have raised funds, and will continue to do so by applying for grants. And we have registered as a non-profit organization."

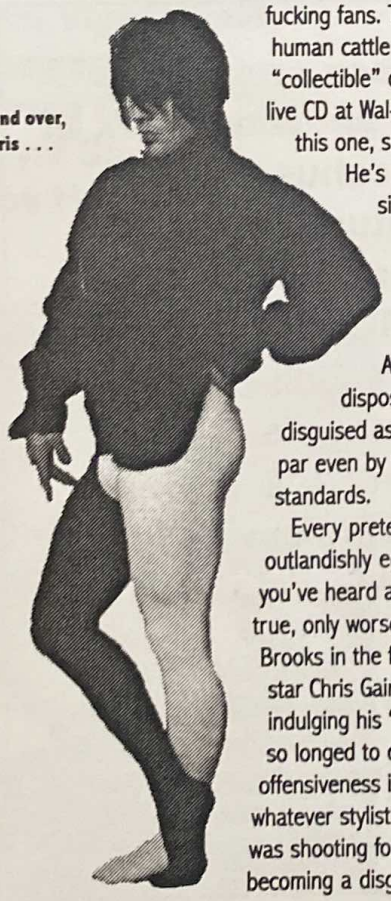
The original motivation for establishing No Phase, said Mr. Hunt, was "the healthy amount of locally unrecognized artists in need of somewhere to show their work, outside of the traditional Roanoke gallery." These artists, he said, "are pushing the boundaries of what's accepted by the local art establishment."

No Phase artspace is currently showing work at Bacchus Grill.
The featured artists are Nell Carr, Collin Daiber and Tom Dorathy.
Bacchus Grill (formerly Cafe Jano) is at 1768 Apperson Drive in Salem, near the Salem Valley 8 movie theater.

Hours
Lunch Tuesday – Friday 11:30am – 2:00pm.
Dinner Tuesday – Thursday 5:00pm – 12:00am
Friday and Saturday 5:00pm – 2:00am.
Closed Sunday and Monday
540.389.3005

Album of the Year!

Chris Gaines
Greatest Hits/Garth Brooks In The Life Of Chris Gaines
(Capitol)



Bend over, Chris . . .

For the first time in my life I want to fuck Garth Brooks. Really let him have it, too. I want to bend him over a barstool and make a man out of him. Give him a good once over, videotaping it so I can beat it to the money shot. He deserves it, because that's just what he's doing to his legions of brainwashed fans.

And the man does have legions of fucking fans. The same brainless human cattle who bought every "collectible" cover-variation of his live CD at Wal-Mart will return for this one, surely making it a hit. He's anally raping every single one of his supporters by once again encouraging them to cough up their hard-earned American dollar for a disposable piece of crap disguised as "art" that is sub-par even by Garth Brooks standards.

Every pretentious and outlandishly egomaniacal detail you've heard about this album is true, only worse. Yes, it's Garth Brooks in the fictitious role of rock star Chris Gaines, and yes he's indulging his "rock" side as he has so longed to do. But its level of offensiveness is so total that whatever stylistic sidestep Brooks was shooting for loses all meaning, becoming a disgusting pop-culture freak show. Buying this album inspires the same feelings early circus-goers must have felt choking down their better judgment and paying 50 cents to see the dog-faced boy. It feels wrong, but oddly attractive. And participating in the exploitation makes you question something inside yourself that you're not comfortable with.

I don't need to tell you that this music is drivel. It straddles the easygoing line between Adult Contemporary and Lite Funk with the artfulness of a chimp with a paintbrush. I honestly forgot that there even was a line between the two since Richard Marx farted off into the static between stations. But I will warn fans of James Taylor's later work who think they might enjoy Chris Gaines: even you will feel gypped by the smoothed-over, Don-Was-produced crap dressed up as "rock" in this CD.

Nor do I need to tell you that Brooks' concept of recording as a fictional, more beautiful (?) rock idol is about as original as the Offspring's take on punk rock. Forget Marilyn Manson's post-modern sci-fi rock. Has Mr. Brooks ever heard of a guy named David Bowie? He might like it. His little album called "The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust" also created a fictional character. Only when Bowie did it, he inspired a generation of followers and helped popularize a genre on the fringe (Glam Rock). And Bowie was a more convincing queen than Brooks is. By dressing like Prince (please see the absolutely hysterical harlequin sausage-tights picture in the booklet, also printed on the left of this page), he is not daringly leading Jim Wal-Mart-shopper down the road to a better understanding of other "lifestyle choices." He's just making all of us feel a little uncomfortable. In fact, the whole Prince parallel – music as well as image – is head-spinningly confusing. By taking the worst aspects of "the Artist", with a heavy dollop of James "The Steamroller" Taylor, he's demonstrating that he not only doesn't know the first thing about rock music, but also that he's an awkward and heavy-handed impersonator.

I guess the thing that bothers me the most about this album is that some people will like it. If this were Richard Marx after all, it wouldn't matter, though it would still be funny. A lot of his fans are sure to despise it (with that wig, nobody is going to leave this CD on the dash of their pick-up), but enough of them are going to be suckered into thinking it's a 'pretty good CD.' For these people Brooks is seen as a sort of Renaissance man who can play baseball as well as country music, and this album will be their first, perhaps only, experience with theater in music. Thus, to them, Brooks will be elevated even higher in his superstar status to a risk-taker capable of any artistic medium, on par with Leonardo Da Vinci or Tim Allen. And apparently there's a fucking movie of this coming out, so watch out. All these Garth Brooks fans will spawn some day, maybe even now, and will raise their progeny on the Genius of Brooks. What a strange and terrifying world we have to look forward to.

So, all in all, for making us think a little bit more about the crack problem in America, for having some kickin' tunes, and for making me question my own sexuality, I will declare Garth Brooks' new CD, In The Life Of Chris Gaines, Vince Eruptum's Album Of The Year 1999.

– Vince Eruptum

Big Stars in a Galaxy of Heartbreak

Velvet Crush
Free Expression

Velvet Crush has boldly adopted a lost cause in power-pop. And an unpopular task at that, considering most casual listeners aren't even familiar with the term, let alone the genre. When names like The Raspberries and Ray Davies are met with blank shrugs, it's clear that any ground previously broken has long since been filled back up. But the greatest strength of the music is that it thrives in disappointment. Power-pop responds to failure and heartbreak by becoming more beautiful. By the time Big Star got to their third album, for example, they had decayed to the point that Alex Chilton was nearly comatose in the studio from a crippling combination of depression and alcoholism. The result: Sister Lovers, a power-pop masterpiece dripping with fragile, soaring melodies and an overwhelming feeling of remorse disguised as redemption. The ultimate dark-night-of-the-soul for Chilton, but for us a gorgeous and transcendent album.

Being that Velvet Crush's first albums were met with a tepid public reaction, and that they are strictly faithful to music of the past, they too are destined for obscurity. But they have created the perfect scenario for a brilliant power-pop record. It's not that they have the nothing-left-to-lose desperation of Chilton – their music is surprisingly level-headed and pleasant – but in holding a torch for power-pop, the runt of the litter in the rock and roll family, they've isolated themselves from any sort of mainstream. Unlike power-pop poster boy Matthew Sweet, their pal and co-producer of the record, the guys in Velvet Crush have a very low profile. From rock's sidelines, they're free to indulge their hero worship, and astound those who do finally discover them. Listening to Velvet Crush is a bit like watching a John Sayles movie, wondering why you haven't heard of him before. Velvet Crush's fourth album, Free Expression, opens with "Kill Me Now", a joyous kiss-off anthem that's as beautiful as any love song. Its bright, shiny chords, double-tracked harmony vocals, and triumphant chorus set the pace for the album, in theme and in music. It is open and optimistic, but just below the warm melodies on the surface is a cutting bitterness.

Free Expression addresses letdowns in true pop form. Desperation, apathy, and a feeling of disappointment in oneself are the emotions beneath the surface, but they're quickly shrugged off. Infatuated with the starry-eyed release in each song's shimmery chorus, Velvet Crush choose to look on the brighter side, letting their ringing open chords lift the songs into the stratosphere. There is sunshine and clear blue skies in every song – "Things Get Better" even has chirping birds underneath the Beatle-esque ballad. "Gentle Breeze" summons the Byrds' chiming 12-string guitars as well as sweeping, big-sky pedal steel (an instrument they often use, which in the past has linked them with the Alt-Country set). This record is woozy and light-headed, with enough joy to smother the sadness. "The Unlucky One" lets a bit of the unhappiness slip up to the surface, with its strained chorus and George Harrison-style slide guitar. All throughout, the vocals restrain the heartbreak, aching on the high notes. You can't win 'em all the time, and moments like this on the album reveal some needed vulnerability. Power-pop is all about being down about a girl, after all.

Comparisons tend to belittle a songwriter's talent, but since Velvet Crush consciously use their heroes as a template, its not so offensive to say that they sound a lot like their influences. Paul Chastain and Ric Menck, the songwriters and now sole members of the band, aren't merely trying to produce a tribute album to their idols, though. They use the vocabulary established by the Beatles and Chilton to say something new on a constant quest to find the essence of a great pop song.

***Free Expression* is on Bobsled Records**

At this point, ten years into their career, Velvet Crush has assembled a fine collection of albums and singles, helped populate a near power-pop revival with Mr. Sweet, and perfected the craft of the three-minute pop song. They may have sealed their fate by faithfully following in Big Star's footsteps, but being of clear head, they have a better chance of lasting long enough to see their impression. They show no signs of disintegrating into a Chilton-esque cloud of ashes now, despite being pared down to a mere duo. And who knows, maybe ten years from now, Velvet Crush will have the same sort of influence on modern musicians, the way Big Star inspired Paul Westerberg and R.E.M. to look outward with determination rather than look inward and self-destruct. By the way, hold out for the vinyl if you can. It comes on old-fashioned thick vinyl with a nice big poster - not one of those phony CD-fold-out posters. – *VE*

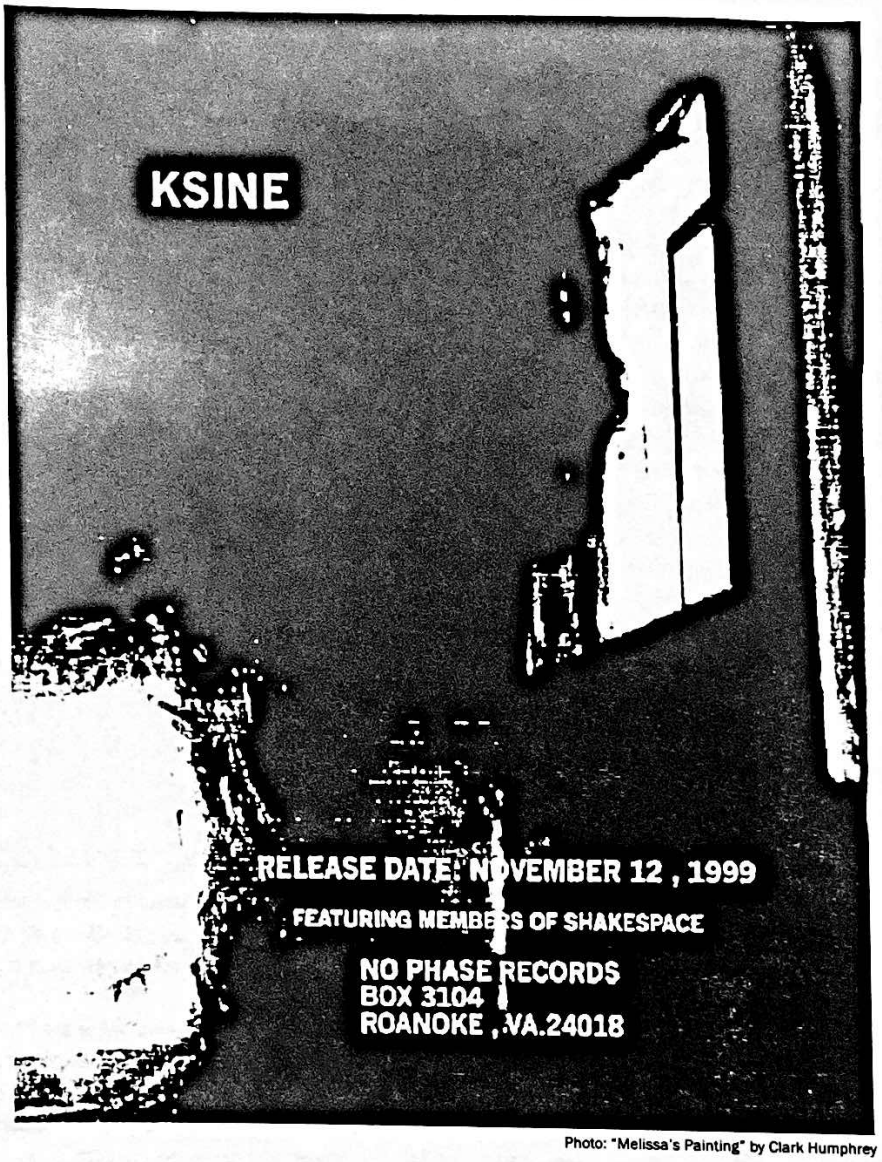


Photo: "Melissa's Painting" by Clark Humphrey

Available at Safe as Milk Records,
or $8 post-paid to No Phase Records.

Proceeds go to No Phase artspace.

Coming in December – The New Shakespace!

Journey into Space

Shakespace
Air Sign Orange
(Happy Couples/Steady State)

Ksine
Ksine
(No Phase Records)

About eight months or so ago, things were starting to look pretty grim for music here in the Dim Star City. With clubs changing owners and names almost daily, area bands felt the crunch. This is a small town, after all, and what affects a few affects all. One band that almost succumbed was Shakespace, our own high priests of glamorous space rock. What started as a short sabbatical while they rethought their musical direction and line-up began to resemble a complete demise. But being that they approach their music as a collective of ideas more than as a politically-structured rock band left room for such adjustments, and by last summer they were fully reborn. Now just a four-piece ("just" a four-piece!), they have a refreshed outlook, a streamlined and edgier sound, and an image to rival the later days of the electronic-era Nico.

The new Shakespace is prolific and creative. Just this year, they've seen the release of their self-titled CD, reformed the No Phase artspace, and recorded with rock legend Mitch Easter in North Carolina and D.C. As if that weren't enough, veteran Spaceman Jeremy Kolosine has recorded an album of his own, Ksine. The recordings haven't hit the shelves just yet, and the art gallery is still in the conceptual stage, making Shakespace the ultimate band on the verge.

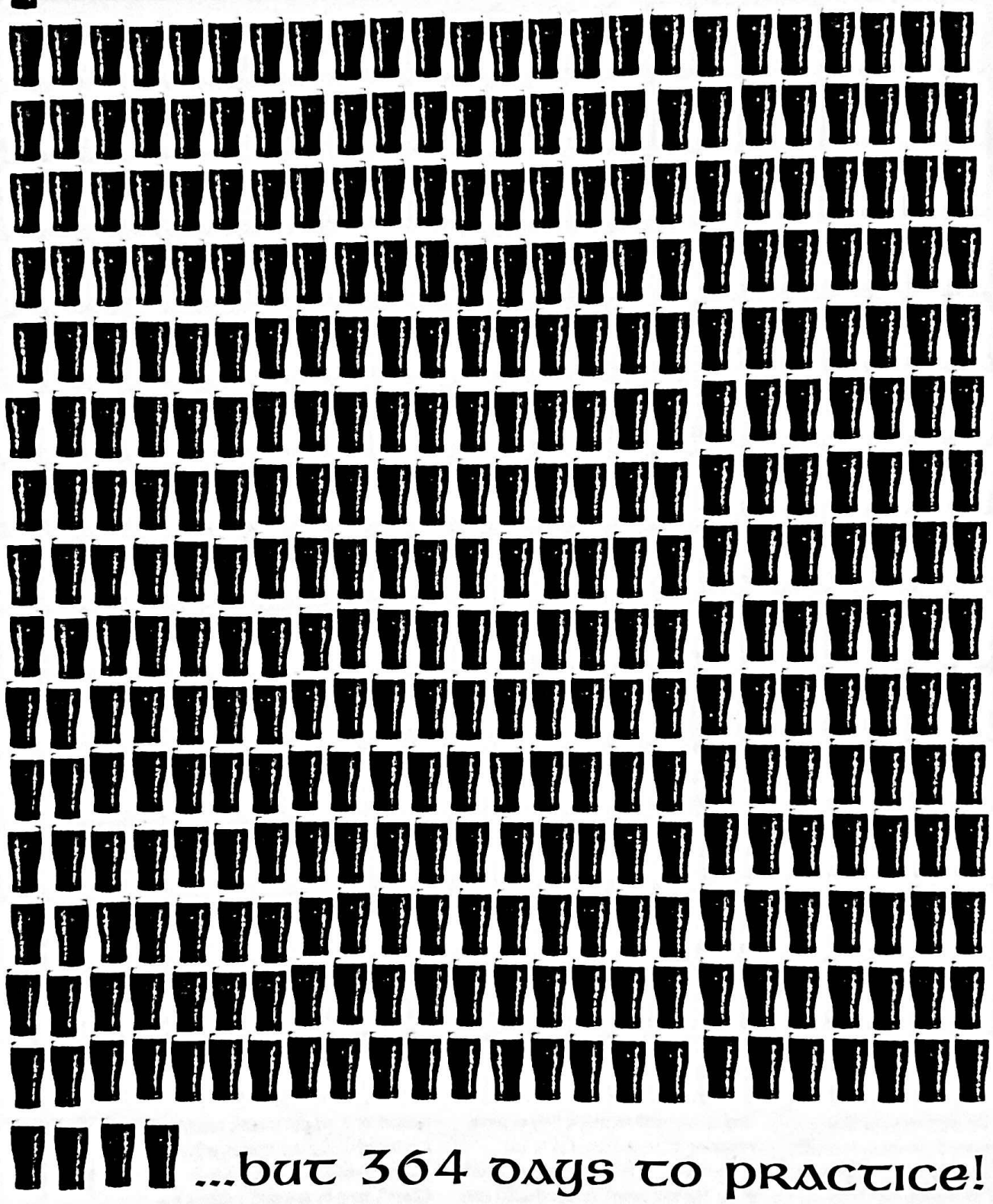
The Mitch-Easter-mixed Shakespace EP showcases the new line-up with a good deal of hi-fi studio enhancement. They play a kind of music that thrives in the studio, but you won't find a thousand layers of overdubs on the new recording. Building from their more rock-oriented multimedia live show, they chose to present their new songs in a stripped down and straightforward two-guitar-bass-and-drums format, with just the occasional guitar solo dubbed in with some reverb. They get the kind of high-end recording they deserve, regaining in precise detail all of the subtleties lost in the noisy mush of a rock show. The four songs, to be released later this year with a handful of remixes, are punchy, unpretentious and surprisingly guitar-oriented. "No Parade", composed by all members, works as a sort of statement of purpose. It's loud, more aggressive than Shakespace has been, and downright danceable. In the song's vocalist, newest member Josh Strawn, there is a strong hint of their fondness for the New Romantics.

Apparently, all it took was a little New Wave to bridge the gap between the Velvet Underground and Ride. The anthemic, minor key "Scari" builds off a network of liquid guitar lines, resolving in a massive, triumphant chorus, with some gorgeous vocal passages. "Drama Queen", sung by Kolosine, indulges the bands Velvet leanings, with muscular guitar and distinctly Reed-ish vocals. A bit of mechanical drumming is the only thing keeping the songs from soaring into the stratosphere. "Already No" is the only carry-over from older material.

Shakespace are (L-R) Marty Bensinger, Josh Strawn, Michelle Ferguson and Jeremy Kolosine.

continued on page 15

There's only one St. Patrick's Day...



...but 364 days to practice!

only at

Kara O'Caen's Irish Pub

303 South Jefferson, Downtown Roanoke

Shakespace/Ksine

continued from page 13

With Shakespace revamped as a guitar band, the members have to look elsewhere to find a release for their more experimental ideas. For Kolosine, it didn't take far to look. Going deep in his well of ideas and influences, he produced Ksine, a solo record and persona of astounding clarity. Many members of Shakespace past and present record with Jeremy, but it is clearly his own vision. Like the great European art-rock records of the seventies that Jeremy admires, Ksine captures a unique, if fictional, atmosphere, with a very cinematic approach to composition. Painting images with sound, Ksine conjures a dark Parisian street in winter, a walk alone, a nearly empty bar in Berlin at an unholy hour. Keyboards climb over each other with languid and somewhat disjointed melodies as electronic drums discretely remind the time. The music is very airy, almost breathing at times, with all the texture and color of an oil painting. Occasional splashes of guitar in the distance add depth, while also involving the human element. The surface is slick, a bit chilly, but the intertwining, angular melodies that weave throughout the songs keep the momentum from relaxing.

New age music this is not, after all, and as beautiful as Ksine can be, it never becomes comfortable. You are never lulled by it, rather you are beguiled. The songs here certainly have heaps of ambient atmosphere, but the success of Ksine is that under the watery surface there are great pop songs. Gentle washes of sound may encourage the mind to drift away, but the breathy vocals materializing unexpectedly command attention. The vocal melodies tend to be quite simple, occasionally resembling traditional English folk tunes, but they're all delivered in a decadent, lilting tone. Much like the art-house poetics of Leonard Cohen, or the over-drugged devastation of Berlin-era Lou Reed, Jeremy's singing remains low and hushed, seductive and expressive, almost sinister. "Fire And Sand", with Shakespace guest singers Strawn and Michelle Ferguson, captures all that is best about Ksine – a fluttering backdrop of rainy keyboards, a wistful lyric, a timeless mood. And Josh's reedy saxophone not only serves as another voice, but also summons Bowie's vision of Berlin on the instrumental flip-sides of Heroes and Low.

Even with the modern edge of electronic drums, this is actually very old-fashioned music. Ksine uses a sort of blueprint first designed by Brian Eno, David Bowie and Kraftwerk in the late 70s. With a very Dada, everything-goes approach to songwriting, Bowie and Eno used found sound, cut-up passages of music, and random changes in direction ("oblique strategies") to manipulate their music. Keyboards were used for effect, rather than to emulate as they were designed to do. Recording mostly in the decadent, perpetual nighttime of Berlin, they accomplished something unique. The records made at this time were very visual and classically modern. Like the revolutionary design of communist propaganda posters, their art was stoic, cold and radically new. To this day, Bowie's Low still sounds fresh. A few current artists produce music that achieves the same atmosphere, most notably Portishead, Massive Attack and Radiohead. But as lush and romantic as it may be, Ksine has less in common with Portishead than it does, say, The Idiot by Iggy Pop. (And, by the way, those wondering how a gent from Roanoke can make such European music should note that Kolosine is himself of British stock.)

Ferguson: "Don't you dare put this in Fence."

There are heaps of talent and innovation on these discs. It's a marvel that this caliber of music can be made by such unassuming and modest folks, and here in Roanoke no less. Once again, Shakespace is entering a sort of cocoon to map out a still newer direction. If they continue the tradition of outdoing themselves, we have much to look forward to in the near future.

– Vince Eruptum

Nonforms

By
Bathia

Can't touch these
Yet they can be touched, and feel
Cannot be seen, but they can see
Can't smell them, they don't smell
But some stink, those I care not to entertain
Oh! But those I have known, and have yet to know
Some to know again, if I choose
Some gone, but unforgotten
And not forgetting the ones that make me alive today
All blow me away

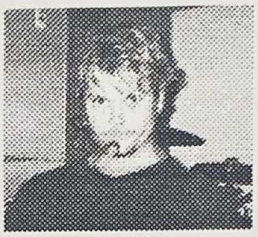
"99 percent of who you are is invisible and untouchable" – Buckminster Fuller

O-X-3

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday and Saturday, November 4th and 5th
THE RAIL
Show starts at 10:00

In studio, working on the new CD
"Edited For Radio"

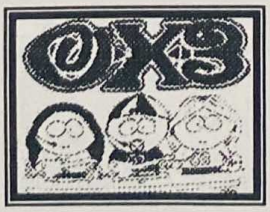


Friday, November 19
BATTLE OF THE BANDS
At the new Chili Peppers in
The Patrick Henry Hotel
Everyone come out to cheer them on!!!
O-X-3! O-X-3! O-X-3! O-X-3!

In studio, working on the new CD
"Edited For Radio"

Friday and Saturday, December 3rd and 4th
THE COFFEE POT
Show starts at 10:00

Also, check out O-X-3's
first CD, *"Emotion"*
available at The Record Exchange
Safe as Milk Records,
and all O-X-3 performances



Then there's the ever popular
O-X-3 T-Shirt
Available at all O-X-3 performances

O-X-3 can also be found online!
http://www.mp3.com/artists/32/ox3.html

And check out the very latest on
O-X-3, The Comic at
http://members.xoom.com/wstrangfrost/ox3/

Your Guide to Mosh Pits Local and Regional

Kara O'Caen's Irish Pub
Corner of Jefferson and Kirk. Downtown Roanoke (540.344.5509)
Every Monday: jazz, cigars, ale tasting
Nov 19 Scottish Society Club Night: bagpipes, dancing
Nov 20 Joe Washington and the Cosmic Spatulas
Nov 27 The Diplomats, Nervous Lolly, Vim Vigor Vitality
Dec 11 The Stimulants, Shakespace, Nervous Lolly (super special rockin' show presented by FENCE - don't miss it)

Chilll Peppers
19 Salem Ave. Downtown Roanoke (540.342.9340)
Every Monday: poetry slam
Every Wednesday: karaoke with Elvis
Every Thursday: "Laundry Night" (selected food and drinks, 25 cents)
Nov 19 Lineage
Nov 20 No Merit
Nov 26 Southbound
Nov 27 Tempered Steel

Chilll Peppers Bar & Grill at the Patrick Henry Hotel
617 South Jefferson St. Roanoke (540.345.1340)
Nov 19 OX3 vs. Aftermath (Battle of the Bands)
Nov 20 Trancendent vs. Sierra Dog Romeo (Battle of the Bands)
Nov 26 Boogie Solution
Nov 27 Hot Plate
Dec 3 Clatyon Ellers Band vs. Overbound (Battle of the Bands)
Dec 4 Blind Vision vs. TBA (Battle of the Bands)
Dec 10 Boogie Soultion vs. TBA (Battle of the Bands)
Dec 11 TBA (Battle of the Bands)
Dec 17 790 Robot Head
Dec 18 Final 4 in Battle of the Bands
Dec 31 Wild New Year's Eve party

The Club
627 Townside Rd. Roanoke (540.343.6751)
Nov 19 Antique Rockers
Nov 20 Sound Hounds Blues Variety Group
Nov 21 WC Clark Review
Nov 24 Greg Piccolo & Heavy Juice

The Coffee Pot
2902 Brambleton Ave. Roanoke (540.774.8256)
Nov 19,20 Martin & Wilbourne
Nov 24 Loud Clangin' & Bangin'
Nov 25 Doug Clark & the Hot Nuts
Nov 26,27 Truckers Delight

Confeddy's
24 Campbell Ave. Roanoke (540.343.9748)
Nov 19 Transcendent
Nov 26 Fat Daddy

The Rail
1106 Kessler Mill Rd. Salem (540.389.0917)
Nov 19,20 Full Tilt
Nov 26,27 The Worxx

STOP PRESS
The Diplomats
plus
Swank
plus More
at the Universal Cafe in downtown Roanoke on Nov 27 (daytime show)

Wit's End/Belly Of The Beast
1790 Thompson Memorial Dr. Salem (540.387.3539)
Nov 19 Hot Plate
Nov 20 Steel Pterodactyl
Nov 22,23 Radar Rose
Nov 25 Gasoline Alley
Nov 27 Agents of Good Roots

Cat's Cradle
300 East Main St. Carrboro NC (919.967.9053)
Nov 17 Blonde Redhead, Black Heart Procession
Nov 17 Medeski Martin & Wood (at The Ritz)
Nov 18 The Blue Dogs
Nov 19 Blue Mountain, Marah
Nov 20 Sankofa
Nov 21 Insane Clown Posse
Nov 23 TYFU Single Release Party
Nov 26 Joe Louis Walker
Nov 27 The Promise Ring, Burning Airlines. Dismemberment Plan, Rainer Maria
Nov 29 The Bouncing Souls, H2O, Casualties, Vision
Dec 1 Clutch
Dec 3 Luna, Macha
Dec 4 Gran Torino, Rustic Overtones
Dec 8 Fugazi, The Ex
Dec 10 Southern Culture on the Skids
Dec 12 El Vez Christmas show
Dec 13 Flicker
Dec 16 Squirrel Nut Zippers

Go Studios
100 South Merritt Mill Rd. Chapel Hill NC (919.969.1400)
Nov 18 Andre Williams, The Sadies
Dec 3 Shannon Wright
Dec 4 Boy Sets Fire, Reach The Sky
Dec 8 Bardo Pond
Dec 11 Burning Up

Trax
121 11th Street NW, Charlottesville VA (800.594.8499)
Nov 18 Agents of Good Roots
Nov 21 Train
Nov 27 Ernies
Dec 2 Pietasters
Dec 3 Deep Banana Blackout
Dec 9 Lake Trout
Dec 10 Baaba Seth
Jan 7 Disco Biscuits

Ziggy's
433 Balty St. Winston-Salem NC (336.748.1064)
Nov 18 Insane Clown Posse, Twizted
Nov 19 P.O.D., Guano Apes
Nov 20 Jupiter Coyote
Nov 24 Gran Torino
Nov 25 Weekend Excursion, Collapsis
Nov 26 Widespread Panic, Dirty Dozen Brass Band (LJUM Coliseum in Winston-Salem)
Nov 26 Emma Gibbs, Ancient Harmony
Nov 27 Jump Little Children
Nov 30 Moby, Low Fidelity Allstars
Dec 3 Southern Culture on the Skids
Dec 31 New Year's Eve: Absolute 80's!!

Boathouse
Harbor Park on the Elizabeth River 119 Park Ave. Norfolk VA (757.625.1445)
Nov 26 Moby, Low Fidelity Allstars, Marcy Playground
Nov 28 Godsmack, Jim Rose Circus, Reveille

9:30 Club
Washington DC (202.393.0930)
Nov 16 Wilco, Old 97's
Nov 18 Smash Mouth, Citizen King
Nov 19 Medeski Martin & Wood
Nov 20 Moxy Fruvous
Nov 21 Lucinda Williams, Bottle Rockets
Nov 23 Ratdog featuring Bob Weir & Rob Wasserman; Beth Hart
Nov 24 Filter, System of a Down
Nov 26 Guster, Jump Little Children
Nov 27 Everything, Earth to Andy, Muse
Nov 28 Megadeath, Static X, DDT
Nov 29 Big Bad Voodoo Daddy
Dec 2 Jars of Clay
Dec 3 The Samples
Dec 9 Splender, Shades Apart, Pound
Dec 10 Luna, Gorky's Zygotic Mynci
Dec 11 All Mighty Senators, Jah Works
Dec 18 Clutch
Dec 27 Vertical Horizon

FENCE
PRESENTS

The Stimulants
From Atlanta, GA
SHAKE SPACE
Nervous Lolly
Sat 11 Dec 1999
@ Kara O'Caens
Corner of Jefferson and Kirk Aves, downtown Roanoke
doors 8pm
Tickets $5 or $4 in advance from Safe As Milk Records
FENCE ... GET OFF IT & SUPPORT LOCAL MUSIC

Gangster Booty Productions Presents
Nov 20
STATIONS and The Ghouls
at the Kafe House, Washington DC

GETPLUGGEDIN

THE ONLY LOCAL MUSIC TELEVISION

ROANOKEPLUGGED-IN

check your cable guide for
times and listings

"You may as well stick a phone jack in my ass"

Okay, I have to come clean, I'm an internet junkie. But, no, I'm not going to sit here screaming the ususal praises. Suffice it to say, any form of media that lets me prod the world from the comfort of my john with my smoke de morn is okay with me

The Weekly World News Online
www.weeklyworldnews.com

For years it's been there, taunting you, buried between the Archie comics and packs of Breath Assure, calling you to dance in its forbidden world. People laugh and mock this collection of unbelievable truths, and chastise those who dare glide across her page. But you, confronted by disapproving headshakes at the check-out, want to take hold of that shaking head as she rings a pound of olive loaf and your WWN, and scream: "WHERE ARE MY VELCRO ZIPS THIS YEAR?" Be ashamed no more, you now have the ability to dig deep in the archives of this pile of world information.

Log on and you'll find the current cover and the highlights ("Scientists' research reveals . . . it takes 3 million years for a human soul to reach Heaven" or "Court says town can boogie the night away"). In a fairly accessible fashion, all of your favorites are there. Look, it's Dear Dottie and the Page 5 Girl right next to Bat Boy and Ed Anger. Oh! Here's a fun party trick! There's an archive section. Go to their search engine and type in some words that make you think WWN. I tried 'eaten alive' and 'antichrist'. Finally, Mama can be proud, you can get an email address here. You better believe I threw myself on that! From now on, write me at the address at page right.

Sites That Do Stuff
www.amused.com/sites.html

This was sent to me (thanks Ian), and damnit, it's one of those places that can really help you chisel away those working hours. Fairly self-explanatory, this is a branch of amused.com, and it is (get ready) – A List Of Sites That Do Stuff. There are hundreds of things, from the idiotic (Da Crib Juke Box – I find anything involving that fucking dancing baby really annoying) to the brilliant (Ken White's Coin Flipping Page – maybe it's just the Stoppard in me). You can 'create' just about everything: cyber-chickens, three-headed spotless cows, Britney Spears songs, Hollywood Sci-Fi blockbusters (a la Mad Libs), the list keeps going. Maybe you'd like to try your hand abusing Bill Clinton, William Shatner, or yourself if you're of that sort.

A couple of things though: many require plug-ins (especially Shockwave), and some of these sites are just plain dumb, so be prepared. I personally think the time spent plodding through is worth it (your boss won't mind). As a bonus they link you to Sites That Do Stuff: Games. It's worth a browse - try Boris Yeltsin's Operation, or Gimme That Dang Pill! where you have to get all of the pills in the toilet before Elvis can eat them.

AJR Newslink
ajr.newslink.org/menu.html

American Journalism Review's Newslink site is to world news what 'Vote Smart' is to politics. This is one of the sites that fulfills the promise television dropped years ago. With its impressive collection of over 9000 links to magazines, newspapers, radio, TV, and wire services all over the world, this is easily the only place you need to go for news.

Interested in New South Wales, Australia? Check out the independent Byron Shire Echo. Does the idea of U.S. papers covering an U.S.-involved event overseas seem a little biased to you? Try the Albanian Economic Tribune, or better yet, the Bosnian Oslobondje. It was eye-opening to read what the rest of the world had to say about our 'involvement' in Kosovo. A few of these sites are in the proper language for the country, and there are one or two out there that have a registration fee, but not many.

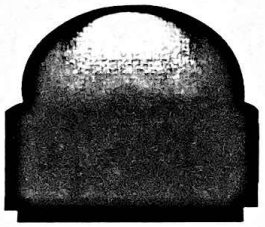
Litterpan Alley, Roscoe The Cat's Amazing Live Litterpan Cam
http://members.accessus.net/~dejay/

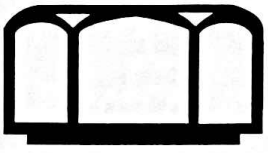
I have spent thousands of hours searching for the truth, assuming one day all of This would come together. I believe, like those searchers before me, that I have found the pathway. If you haven't figured it out yet, this site is primarily a web cam pointing at Roscoe the cat's litterbox. Four or five times a day I find myself clearing my mind and opening my soul and waiting. Waiting.

> "Try Gimme That Dang Pill! where you have to get all of the pills in the toilet before Elvis can eat them."

I have never seen Roscoe poop. I have never seen Roscoe pee. I've tried different times of day, meditation, prayer, to no use. In fact, as a friend of mine says, there's no evidence that it's not just the same damn picture every time. To those unbelievers I respond with the accepted, time-tried, catch-all stance – Faith. There are links to archived photos, but I can't do it. I want my first glimpse to be our private moment. Roscoe has something very important to say and he'll reveal himself when the time is right and I've proven myself worthy. When my day starts to fall apart, when it's hard to keep going, I just load this place up and gain clarity.

Okay, I guess that's about it. Any comments or suggestions of sites to check would be great. Don't forget to send them to me at **bobs_johnson@weeklyworldnews.net**



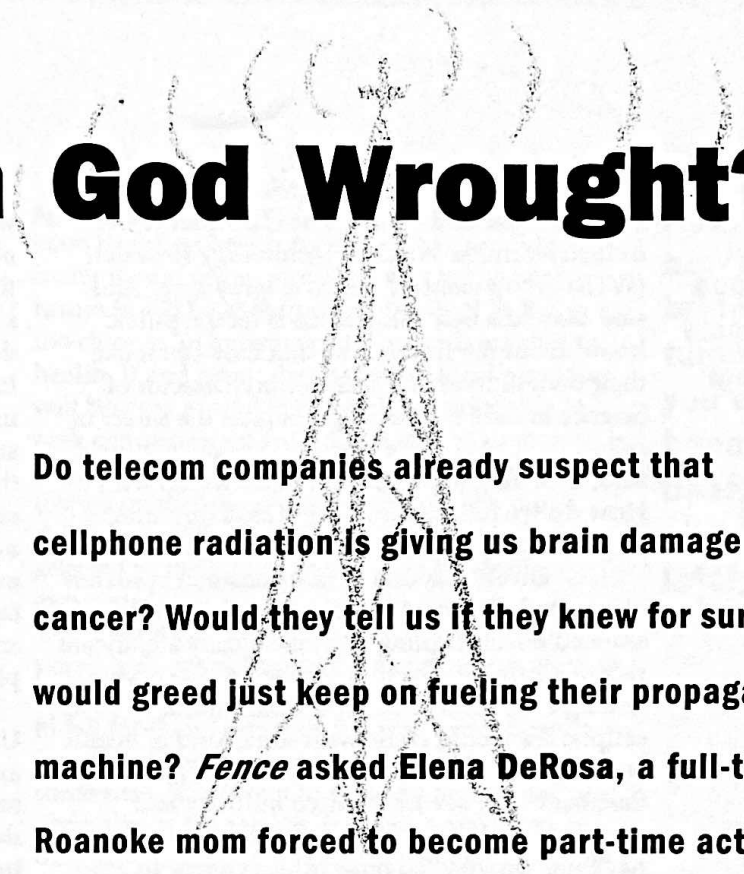


...got 'em.

THE ROCK OF VIRGINIA

The John Boy & Billy Big Show (6am-10am) Heidi, featuring the Liquid Lunch (10am-3pm)
The Chainsaw Circus (3pm-7pm) Ruthy (7pm-Midnight) The Rubber Room (Midnight-2am)

"What Hath God Wrought?"



Do telecom companies already suspect that cellphone radiation is giving us brain damage or cancer? Would they tell us if they knew for sure, or would greed just keep on fueling their propaganda machine? *Fence* asked Elena DeRosa, a full-time Roanoke mom forced to become part-time activist

"I pledge allegiance, to the dollar, of the Almighty Phone Companies of America."

As more and more (extremely high) flagpoles hide cellphone antennas, I often wonder if that pledge will be replacing the outdated one that we've used for hundreds of years. Will new prayers be popping up too as crosses on churches suddenly rise up? . . ."In the name of the wireless, digital and clear connection, amen." As steeples suddenly begin springing up higher, perhaps the bells, for an extra monthly fee, could be made to belt out the lessor's jingle. With rents going for around $36,000 a year, these telecommunication companies certainly spread the wealth.

From July 1994 to June 1999, the FCC netted over $25 billion from wireless auctions. Along with all the money spent on lobbying for it, is it any wonder the Telecommunication Act of 1996 was passed right through? I can't think of any other Act that has stripped the rights of ordinary citizens and served them up on a silver platter to the telecommunication industry like this one has. One of my favorite parts says, basically, that it is against the law if any city council tries to stop a cellphone antenna from going up for health reasons. How dare anyone tell me I cannot question the safety and health concerns of cellphone antennas and the microwave radiation they emit! Am I not allowed to protect my family? Constitutionally, it seems that I have the right to bear arms but not to bear brains.

"Constitutionally, it seems that I have the right to bear arms but not to bear brains."

As the FCC's guidelines focus on thermal radiation only, and they'll be the first to tell you they are not a health agency but only an engineering compliance agency, how are we protected by its standards for constant low-level microwave radiation? What they guarantee is that basically you won't fry if you stand next to a tower, but they cannot give any data on the non-thermal radiation emitting constantly at low doses. Does the FCC even have a database containing the location of all transmitters to make sure these facilities do not exceed cumulative radio frequency (RF) limits? Is there a database in the Roanoke Valley showing every tower, antenna and panel, and how much RF they're emitting? I seriously doubt it.

Don't think the telecommunication companies are going to fund any research into towers any time in the near future. They have their hands full trying to fend off reports about the harmful effects of cellular phones themselves. Imagine their dismay when *The Washington Post* reported just this May that the $25 million research funded by the cellular telephone industry

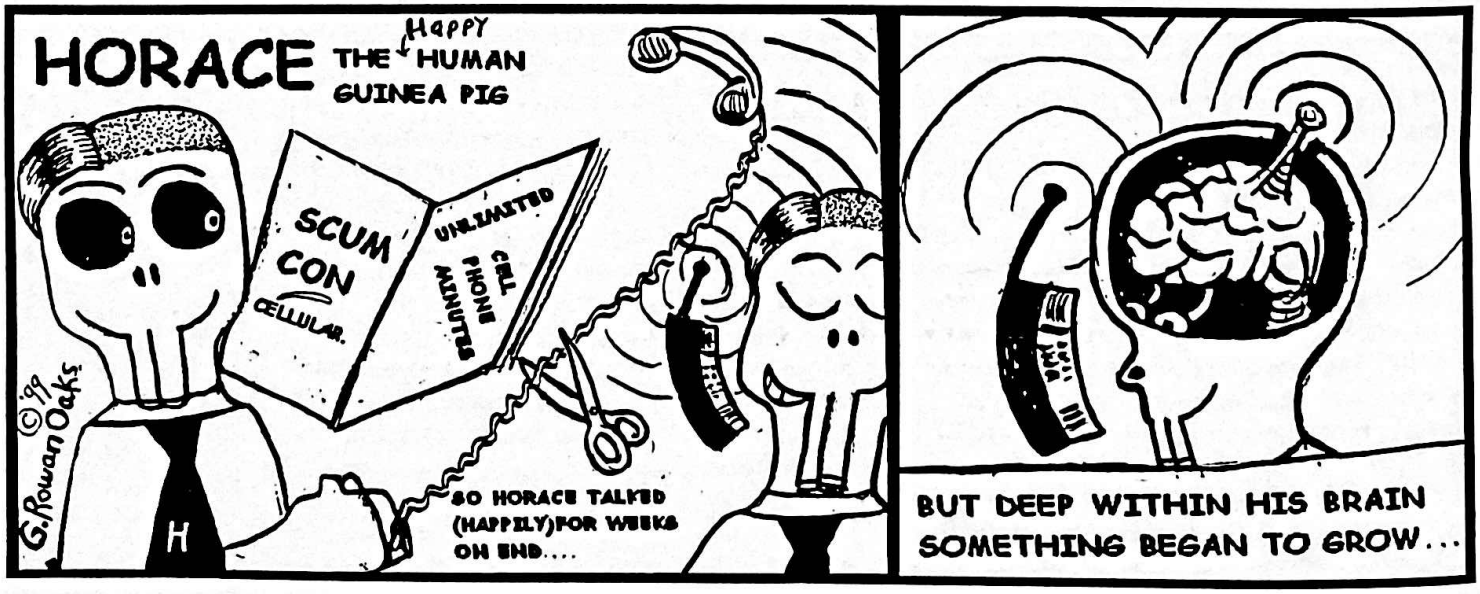
"You would think cellphones would come with some kind of health warning label."

suggested there may be a correlation between cellphone use and cancer. The chairman of the industry-funded Wireless Technology Research (WTR) group claimed it was a "gray area" and said that "the best thing to do is let the public know about the findings so that they can make their own judgment." The Deputy Director of Science at the FDA, which regulates the safety of cellphones, agreed: "The question now is," he said, "We've got a result. What do we do with it? How do we follow through?" Good question, Deputy, but I haven't seen anything done yet.

Given that one WTR-sponsored epidemiology study by the American Health Foundation showed a near tripling of a statistically significant risk of a rare kind of tumor called a neurocytoma among cellphone users, you would think cellphones would come with some kind of health warning label. Hmmm, I'm starting to get a flashback . . . I see the tobacco industry and decades of claiming that smoking and nicotine have no "proven" adverse health effects. In 1945 the first studies linking smoking and lung cancer appeared, and warned that the risk of developing lung was doubled by smoking. Today we know that smoking increases the risk of lung cancer by at least ten times, and as much as 50 times depending on how long you've been smoking.

I have a deja vu feeling, only this time it's the telecom companies who are knowingly passing on serious health risks to the public while withholding and/or misrepresenting information about these risks by claiming "not published, therefore not proven." The public still has the right to know, and the right to make an educated decision as to whether or for how long they want to use a cellphone. Just like smokers, cellphone users have a choice. But what about the person standing next to the cellphone user or living near the antenna that's picking up that call? A person standing near a smoker could move away to avoid second-hand smoke. Where can I go to avoid the microwaves? I can't shut them off. I can't go into a another room. Why is it taboo to smoke in the car when you have children as passengers, but it's okay to use a cellphone?

A 1996 study by Drs. Lai and Singh of the University of Washington found that a two-hour exposure to RF electromagnetic radiation, the same radiation emitted by cellphones, damaged the brain-cell DNA of rats. Remember that next time you hand over your cellphone to your child. The World Health Organization has commissioned a report looking into the possible connection between cellphone radiation and brain cancer, leukemia, headaches and sleeplessness. Recently in London a panel from the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee called for more wireless phone health research on radiation risk, and stated that "the danger is


HORACE
THE Happy HUMAN GUINEA PIG
SCUM CON CELLULAR
UNLIMITED CELL PHONE MINUTES
©'99 G.Rowan Oaks
H
SO HORACE TALKED (HAPPILY) FOR WEEKS ON END....
BUT DEEP WITHIN HIS BRAIN SOMETHING BEGAN TO GROW...

RADIATION NATION

unclear but there is sufficient anecdotal evidence and uncertainty to justify further research."

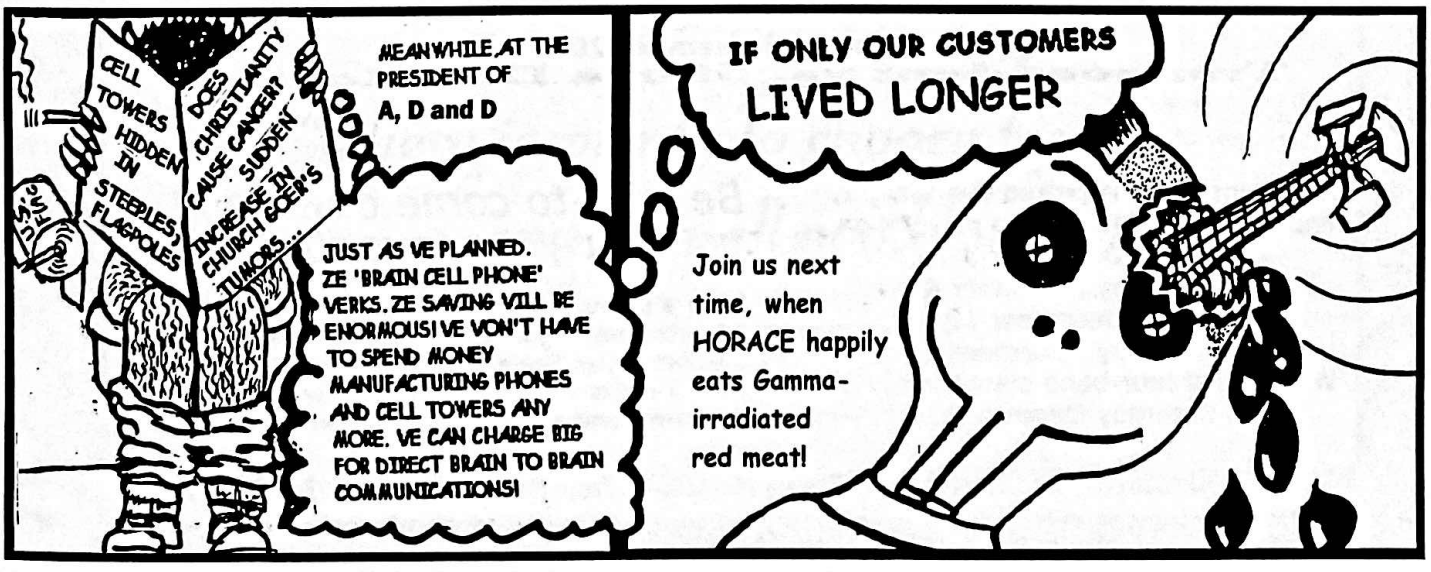
Experts from Scotland's largest health board have warned local authorities against erecting mobile phone masts on schools, and urged the toughening of safety limits on radiation emissions, as fears over links to cancer and child leukemia grow. Wouldn't it be reckless, given the lessons of previous disease epidemics linked to substances such as tobacco, lead and asbestos, to allow these masts so near to children when effects might not be seen for years?

Little or no published research has been carried out on the effects of long-term exposure, month after month, year after year, from living close to a tower or antenna. In the absence of conclusive evidence regarding the safety of cellphones and antennas, why does America lack the common sense to use prudent avoidance? Money, of course. Telecommunication companies usually approach the most financially vulnerable people or organizations, who are in need of easy money and quickly fall under the spell of telecom companies with scant regard for future consequences or the community's best interest. The base stations are deliberately placed close to residences, schools and churches because it's cheaper for the companies to hook up to electricity, and to get easy access to roads.

Although some lawsuits have been won against these telecom companies, they have not been based on health concerns. It is possible, many would argue probable, that in the near future it will be shown scientifically that living too close to an antenna or tower is damaging to health. If and when that happens, legal remedies will become available that will allow people to seek compensation from the telecom companies, and also from those who allow the antennas or towers on their land. Unfortunately, it's our children, and their children, who have been selected as the guinea pigs in this sickening experiment.

It's up to us to educate ourselves on the possible dangers. The telecom companies want to keep you in the dark and remain ill-informed, and to fall for their "less than 100 watt" propaganda. Do your homework, go on-line and check out some sites. You owe it to yourself and future generations. Remember, it doesn't make any difference that an antenna is hidden in a flagpole or a cross - the radiation emanating from it does not change, its radio waves pass through steeples and steel. Next time you hold a cellphone up to your ear, ask yourself if your brain is stopping those waves. Notice how many brain tumors you've been hearing about lately? Samuel Morse was quite the visionary when he tapped out the first wireless message in 1844 . . . "What hath God wrought?"

Notice how many brain tumors you've been hearing about lately?


CELL TOWERS HIDDEN IN STEEPLES, FLAGPOLES
DOES CHRISTIANITY CAUSE CANCER? SUDDEN INCREASE IN CHURCH GOER'S TUMORS...
MEANWHILE, AT THE PRESIDENT OF A, D and D
JUST AS VE PLANNED. ZE 'BRAIN CELL PHONE' VERKS. ZE SAVING VILL BE ENORMOUS! VE VON'T HAVE TO SPEND MONEY MANUFACTURING PHONES AND CELL TOWERS ANY MORE. VE CAN CHARGE BIG FOR DIRECT BRAIN TO BRAIN COMMUNICATIONS!
IF ONLY OUR CUSTOMERS LIVED LONGER
Join us next time, when HORACE happily eats Gamma-irradiated red meat!

The NEW

BAR & GRILL

At The Patrick Henry Hotel

PRESENTS

The Battle of the Bands

for 1999 – End of the Millenium

Friday October 29
Boogie Solution vs. Fuzzy Lizard WINNER!

Saturday October 30
Overbound vs. Phil Norman WINNER!

Friday November 5
Hot Plate vs. Blind Vision WINNER!

Saturday November 6
Matt Ramsey Band vs. Clayton Ellers Band WINNER!

Friday November 12
Radar Rose vs. Southbound

Saturday November 13
Fashion Smoothies vs. Lineage

Friday November 19
OX3 vs. Aftermath

Saturday November 20
Transcendent vs. Sierra Dog Romeo

A winning band is picked every night, and the 8 winners go into playoffs on
- Friday December 3
- Saturday December 4
- Friday December 10
- Saturday December 11

With a final four-band playoff on
- Saturday December 18

Be sure to come down and vote for your favorite band

We are producing a compilation CD featuring all 16 of the battling bands. The profits will go to support Easter Seals of Virginia. We will also have T-shirts with bands on them available.
So come and party with your favorite band!

617 South Jefferson Street • Roanoke • Virginia 24011 • Phone (540) 345-1340 • Fax (540) 345-1612

The NEW

BAR & GRILL

At The Patrick Henry Hotel

"Best New Restaurant in Roanoke"

"Best Chilli in Roanoke"

– Voted by readers of *Roanoker* magazine

"Chilli Peppers offers some of the best chili around, but it's also much more than just a chili shop. It is a well put together Southwestern cuisine restaurant"

"There is plenty to choose from, and it is all good"

– Review in *City* magazine

617 South Jefferson Street ✒ Roanoke ✒ Virginia 24011 ✒ Phone (540) 345-1340 ✒ Fax (540) 345-1612

Christmas

If you don't love me by Christmas I will cut out my own tongue. There are ways of making you love me and I know them all. I know I am not supposed to do these things, I should master the more subtle arts of seduction, maybe change my hair, but I can't be too careful. I know the stakes, I stand in front of my mirror and hold my garden shears to my mouth, cold metal barely gracing my lips. I can almost smell the roses. I bought candles yesterday. They were out of black so I bought dark blue. They smell great, scented with fake blueberry that reminds me of children's cereal and cheap candy, the powder kind that comes with the stick, Lik-A-Maid. I light the candles and whisper your name over and over until it doesn't sound like your name anymore, until it hurts my mouth to speak.

I know you love her. I watch you from windows, of cafes, of bookstores, how you touch the sleeve of her coat and brush the hair from her eyes. She laughs at something you've said and you lean down to kiss her. I wonder what you see in her. I study her eyes, her hair, the curve of her neck. I spend hours in front of my mirror duplicating her lipstick. I try to laugh like she does, but it comes out too loud, forced. I go to the same restaurants as you but if you notice me you don't say anything. I watch as you pour her more wine, and as she lights a cigarette she removes from a pretty silver case. Once I broke my water glass because I held it too hard as I watched the both of you. The waiter cleaned up shards of glass and wrapped my bleeding hand in a wet towel. I don't think you noticed.

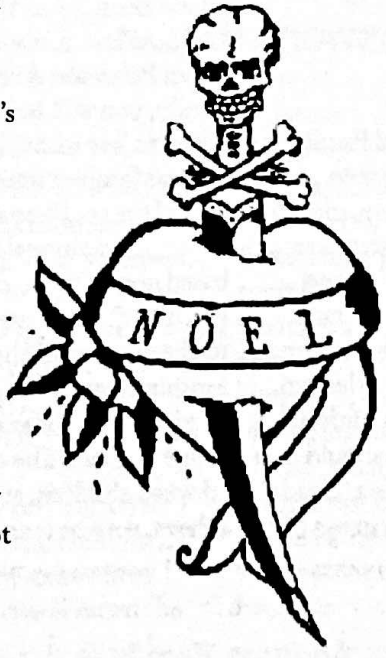
I love watching you sleep. You breathe softly, your arm thrown over your pillow, the silent movement under your eyelids as you dream. You look so warm and peaceful, the moon reflecting on the perfect skin of your back. I don't want to wake you so after an hour I take the bus back to my place. I don't think my apartment is as nice as yours. It's older and I'm sure it isn't as clean. My bathroom has one bulb that hangs from the center of the ceiling, swaying and casting cracked black shadows on the wall as I look in the mirror. I take a needle and hold it up to my eye, dragging the sharp point across the wet, gelatinous surface of my pupil. It doesn't hurt, but it's hard to keep my eyes open. I put the needle down and wash my face. I wash my face a lot. I need my skin to look good for you. If you don't love me by Christmas I'll rip out my eyes.

I think you should know that your girlfriend is a bitch. I went into the shop where she works today. I needed a pair of gloves so I wandered around the racks and shelves until I found a pair that I liked, simple brown knit gloves. I brought them to her register and I wanted to ask her about you but when I opened my mouth to speak no sound came out and she looked real impatient. She rolled her eyes and smirked as I counted out my change to pay for them, and didn't even say "Thank you" or put them in a bag, just handed them to me and went over and started whispering to the other girl behind the counter. I asked her if they had a restroom I could use and she didn't even look at me, just

By Eve Rings

pointed to a door, so I went in and locked it behind me. I was so angry that I urinated all over the floor instead of in the toilet. I know that's gross but she just made me so mad. I took the bus and on the way home I thought of her having to clean it up and I couldn't stop laughing.

Today is not a good day at all. I saw you leave the police station and I got real worried. I went to my apartment and got so upset I finally called you but when you answered I couldn't think of what to say so I hung up. As usual. I have missed my last three doctor's appointments because of you. I know I should go to them, but how can I when I am so worried? You are so beautiful and so perfect. All I want to do is love you and make you happy. We had our first snowfall and I know it's getting close to Christmas. If you don't love me by then I'll tear off all my flesh and leave it in a bloody heap on your doorstep. Today is not a good day at all so I light my candles and carve snowflakes into my thighs with a razor blade.



I am starting to get very frustrated. I know I am not as pretty or smart as she is but I know she doesn't love you like I do. Does she pay as much attention to you? Call you as much as I do? Worry as much? I know she spends more time with you but that is hardly my fault. All the time I spend thinking about you, worrying about you, everything I do is for you. I have a life too, you know. I am getting sick of how selfish you are and I really think things should be more fifty-fifty. I am tired and I need to go to sleep but first I will pull a few hairs out of my head and see how much it will hurt if I have to yank them all out of my skull if you don't love me.

Today is the best day ever! I know you are having a fight with her and I know this shouldn't make me happy but I think it's time you realize that I am the one you are supposed to be with. Okay, I know I shouldn't have called her last night and told her that you are my lover, but the holidays are coming and we should really be together for them. You looked so sad when she didn't answer her door and I know you are probably hurt, but she wasn't right for you anyway. Besides, I am going to come over tonight. I know you have never met me but I feel like I know you. I just know you will love me by Christmas and if you don't, I will cut off parts of your body and feed them to you, and hope that by the time I've reached your heart that you've changed your mind. ❄

Pagan Family Values

Christian or pagan, no one group, writes *Wile E. Peyote*, can claim to own basic human values

The phrase "Traditional Family Values" is one that has seen much press here recently, most of it from and by the conservative Xtian right. There has been so much from that source, in fact, that to the average person, there is no difference between the two.

In speaking of traditional family values, then, we should establish what exactly is a "Traditional Family". Right-wingers like to apply this term to the nuclear/Disney-channel family consisting of Mom, Pop and the Kids (and it would have to be many kids, since they disapprove of both sex education and family planning) living in some suburban ranch house, like Dagwood or the Flanderses. This model is far from traditional, however, since it has only been in existence since World War II, only in the western world, and almost exclusively among the mostly-white middle class. These were the returning GIs, fresh into the workforce with GI-bill cash, and put into prefab houses in planned developments after the War.

Before World War II, the middle class of the US tended to live more like the Waltons, in large Victorian-style houses with lots of bedrooms, and several generations under one roof – what is called an extended family. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, parents, kids, and sometimes even in-laws all under one roof. It was not uncommon at the turn of the century (the last one) for a typical family to include one or more servants! In fact, "The Addams Family", complete with Grandmama, Lurch and Uncle Fester (but maybe not so much Thing) is a perfect example of a traditional family, and I think many of us share their values. Over the last 50 years, however, most of those funky old houses have been divided up into funky new apartments. Prime examples of this are all through Roanoke's Old Southwest, even more so in the West End, down Patterson Avenue. If you are a true traditional family, you will be hard-pressed to find enough house to live in. So, in fact, the move towards nuclear families actually represents the disintegration of the traditional family.

Traditional family values have always been based not on the nuclear family, but on the clan (with a "c" – pay attention), which in turn is integral to the concept of the tribe or village. A clan is a kinship group traditionally presided over by a patriarch and/or matriarch who is the oldest of the clan members. The clan may include both blood and adopted children, as well as grandchildren and inlaws. A tribe is an affiliation of families and clans sharing common values, customs and traditions, and regarding themselves as a tribe. Most tribes are local, bound to a particular territory, and an agrarian settlement of such is called a village. Other tribes, like the Jews or Gypsies, or

"The Addams Family is a perfect example of a traditional family."

even the modern-day Rainbows and Deadheads, are nomadic and scattered, travelling and living as a "guest people" within a larger population. These descriptions fit a pagan community very well, with local groups like covens, nests, groves, circles and hearths being the equivalent of clans; and the larger churches and traditions (Wicca, Druid, Dianic, etc.) being our tribes.

So what might be a traditional family value of a Wiccan coven or a Druidic grove? Well, these are contained in the teaching stories passed down as myths, legends and fairy tales, much like the Xtians do with their Bible. But these pagan values aren't based on beliefs, as faith-based religionists would have it, but upon custom and the traditions of tribal practice. It is not as important to believe in the tribal myth as it is to participate in common tribal rituals and activities. It is what you do and how you do it that counts, not what you believe.

Clan and tribal values are designed to promote social cohesion and make it possible for a number of individuals to live and act together as a unit. Not as a robotic spoke, but as an integral part of life, like an organ in your body. Several universal values stand out as hallmarks: honor (adhering to right vs. wrong), loyalty, respect, honesty are basic to an individual, but some values are direct results of a tribal view. Cooperation naturally heads this list, followed by basic reciprocal courtesies like hospitality, generosity, resourcefulnesss, and interdependence. If all of this sounds familiar, good.

No one has the monopoly on basic civil behaviour, not even the most aesthetic buddhist, if only for the fact that he had to learn somewhere. Because so many modern pagans have rejected the religion (usually Xtian) we were brought up in, I believe we have a tendency to relativize all values at first. But "anything goes" is not the ethic of a functional family, or culture for that matter (yet another reason why anarchy is a pipe dream). Honor is the foundation upon which all of these other values are built. Teaching understanding and obligation is a much more effective way to grow a human than threatening him or her with eternal damnation at every step. Hate breeds hate, and I know I'm not the first to say it. Without honor, humanity becomes nothing more than a Darwinian power struggle, best summed up by the golden rule, "He who has the gold, makes the rules." Not a bad position if you have the gold, but there's always someone else, and there's always more gold.

Paganism, as old as humanity itself, is once again maturing as a religion as more modern pagans move into the middle years of their lives and come to grips with child-raising, financial security, and leadership in both their private and public lives. The recent swings in federal and state elections towards a bit of conservatism is largely a fiscal one, and does not necessarily mean a turn to the right. Rather, it is the latest expression of a gradual disenchantment with the overemphasis on materialism that has come to characterize, even satirize, America and its culture. Pagans have much more to offer than the stereotypical, libertine "do your own thing" tag. If that's what it was all about, pagans would be doomed to marginality, or worse. If, however, the pagan community as a whole reflects what the religion means, not just what it feels like, maybe the idea of traditional family values wouldn't be the catchphrase of the Xtian right. They've only been at it in earnest for about 1400 years, and somewhere along the way they managed to drop the ball.

"Without honor, humanity becomes nothing more than a Darwinian power struggle."

All families, pagan or not, have two basic emotional needs: love and limits. The lack of either is catastrophic. The combination of both is a gift from the God(dess) to the entire world. Striving for balance between them is a challenge to all of us, in whatever home or family we find ourselves a part of.

Thanks to Lewis Sheiber, Oberon, Newkirk Niven, Fathom Hummingbear, and Green Egg.

built for a fetish
a never-ending high
bondaged by current conditions
this living is uninteresting
this mind's purpose was constructed
for freedom
and there is no escaping here
pleading for a moments release
I've been possessed with an urge
to see the dream in person
latex wonderland
in gothic detail

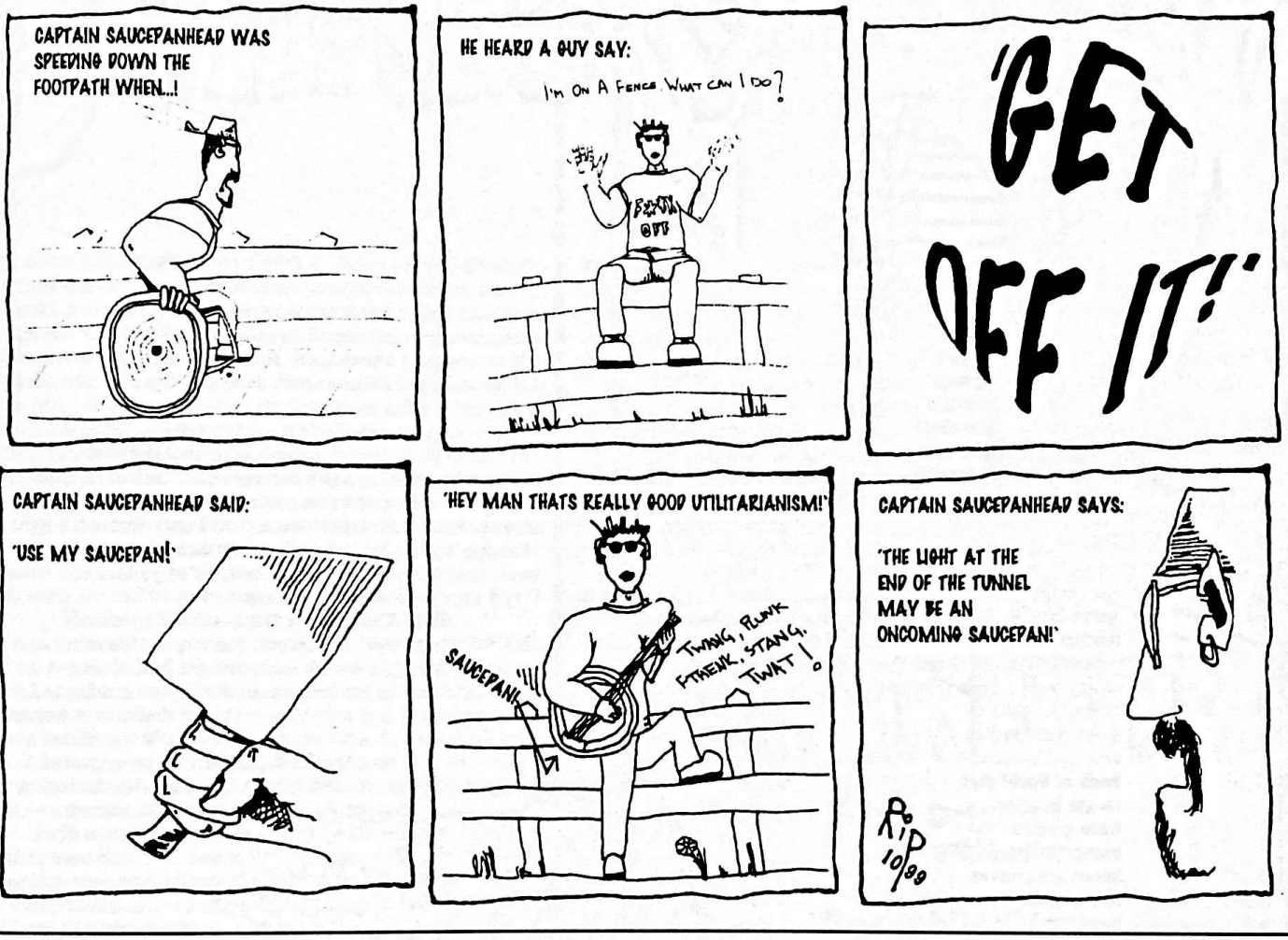
Car Girl

notwolf/99nine
after miller

CAPTAIN SAUCEPANHEAD

Captain Saucepanhead does the Guy a Favour

By RIP


CAPTAIN SAUCEPANHEAD WAS SPEEDING DOWN THE FOOTPATH WHEN...!
HE HEARD A GUY SAY:
I'm On A Fence What can I do?
GET OFF IT!'
CAPTAIN SAUCEPANHEAD SAID:
'USE MY SAUCEPAN!'
'HEY MAN THATS REALLY GOOD UTILITARIANISM!'
SAUCEPAN!
TWANG, PLINK FTHEWK, STANG, TWAT!
CAPTAIN SAUCEPANHEAD SAYS:
'THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL MAY BE AN ONCOMING SAUCEPAN!'
RIP 10/99

FENCE Election Special

Here's the reults of the last Fence survey, in which we asked you to choose between two presidential candidates. Percentages are based on the almost 200 questionnaires you completed (we thank you). Dunno what it all means – do you?

You voted for . . .		You voted against . . .	
Mark Twain	73%	Shania Twain	27%
Dr Fraiser Crane	51%	Dr Niles Crane	49%
Charlie Manson	75%	Marilyn Manson	25%
Muhammed Ali	80%	Ali McBeal	20%
Dick Dale	73%	Dale Jarrett	27%
Francis Bacon	54%	Mia Hamm	46%
Ben Franklin	60%	Ben Stiller	40%
Jean-Luc Picard	51%	Jean-Paul Sartre	49%
Don Corleone	62%	Don Quixote	38%
Jackson Pollock	91%	Michael Jackson	9%
Jack Kerouac	78%	Jackie Chan	22%
Austin Powers	51%	James Bond	49%
The Beatles	57%	The Rolling Stones	43%
Jerry Garcia	95%	Jerry Falwell	5%
Woody Harrelson	64%	Woody Allen	36%
Al Bundy	80%	Al Gore	20%
Sir Winston Churchill	73%	Winston Smith	27%
Pee Wee Herman	62%	Herman Munster	38%

Advertise in FENCE

You should have seen this coming . . . FENCE is now bigger, better, faster, and more widely distributed and read than it's ever been. And it's still FREE! It is FENCE's mission to bring alternative material of the highest quality to southwestern Virginia, but we can't do it without dead presidents. You've helped us get this far, so please stick with us, even though we've introduced a very modest price increase in our advertising rates.

quarter page	half page	full page
15 bucks	25 bucks	35 bucks

HAIR OF THE

In a rare moment of sobriety, **Dogbolter** describes the history and culture of the king of pints

You are what you drink. The contents of that cool glass cylinder are a tendril of your id made liquidly manifest. The alcohomantic in all of us defines the drinker by the drink, and that pint of snakebite on the bar, moist with condensation and caked in greeny brown scum, is a fluid shibboleth that silently reveals the drinker's pressing engagement with oblivion.

Pungent and potent, a good snakebite never disappoints. As every snakebite drinker knows, five or six of these fruity little bastards and you'll soon be all over the place and loving it. But what is a good snakebite? More fundamentally, what is a snakebite?

Cider and lager, basically. A good snakebite, on the other hand, is more than just the sum of its parts. A good snakebite is the product of synergy. That's why the quality and character of, and the reaction between, its two component parts are so crucial. There are two important indicators for a good reaction – opacity and the head. If the reaction is good, the snakebite has a substantial head of foam that is both creamy and crusty, with a surface topology reminiscent of the contours of the human brain. A good reaction also produces a murky body of liquid that ranges in color from green to orange to brown. If lumps are present, so much the better. A good, thick precipitation is hard to achieve with inferior components, but if you can get the pulpiness of freshly squeezed orange juice, you know you've done it right.

Yer typical snakebite drinker

In the end, it all boils down to personal taste, and experimentation is highly recommended. Lagers come in many tastes and strengths, but because too many people are content to drink domestic piss like Budweiser, Coors and Miller (which have a low alcohol content and bland chemical taste, and are simply not up to the job), good lagers are hard to find on most grocery store shelves. If you have to use what's more readily available, Icehouse will make an acceptable snakebite, as will Red Stripe and Harp.

But the best lagers make the best snakebites. It is unfair to select just a few stars from the galaxy of fine lagers, but quality stuff like Ettaler is an excellent component, as are Tusker Premium Lager and Cardinal. The domestic microbew industry is currently in great shape, so there's no need to sweat if you can't get this exotic stuff. Rhino Chasers Lager is a world-class libation, as is Cold Spring Select Stock Lager Although the true original snakebite uses lager, American pale ales such as Sierra Nevada will certainly cut the mustard. And don't forget Mexican beer – Carta Blanca and Bohemia both produce a fine snakebite. As I said – experiment.

Just as good lager is hard to get, good cider is also a rare find in these parts. Hard cider was once the most popular beverage in America, and is making a comeback of sorts, hot on the heels of the microbrewing revolution. It has even been suggested that cider is now where craft brews were about eight years ago and closing in fast. This is great news, or course, but stores need to be harrassed constantly by angry drinkers before they'll stock a good variety of brands.

Cider is a venerable brew, and it desrves some historical perspective. The recorded history of cider dates back to the first century BC. Roman soldiers under Julius Caesar marching across the Kentish countryside in southern England discovered a nation of farmhands lying around drunk in their fields. Despite the fact that most of these drunken yokels were blind and brain-damaged from the crudely made (and, thus, methanol-containing) rough cider, the Romans were impressed. So they took cider back with them to Rome, introducing it to the rest of western Europe along the way. That was some cultural exchange: Rome gave Britain government, philosophy, science and sewers; Britain gave Rome cider. Sounds fair to me. Following the Norman conquest of England in 1066, the consumption of cider increased immeasurably (being from the north of France, the Normans had no trouble appreciating this Champagne-like beverage). In the United States, cider was the beverage of choice among the white Anglo-Saxon protestants who settled the original colonies, but its popularity diminished in the mid-1800s, following the arrival of millions of beer-swilling Germans.

England still leads the world in cider production and consumption, but the United States is gaining ground. While the UK reports approximately 60 cider-makers, there are about half

Cut this out and give it to your bartender ☞

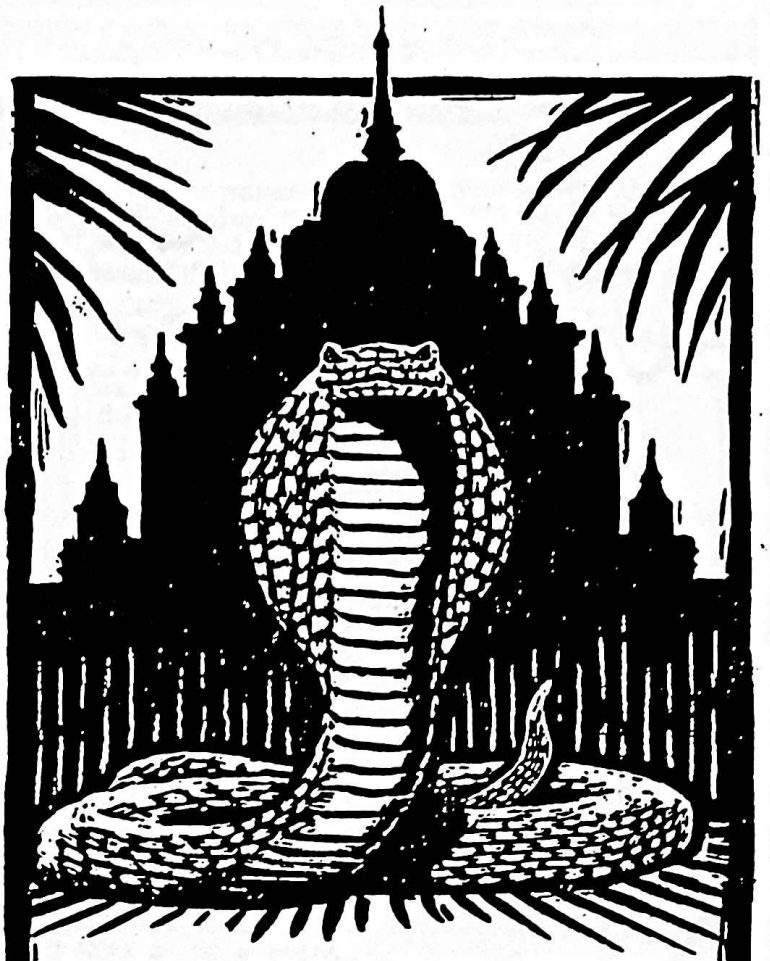
SNAKE

that many on US soil. About two-thirds of these produce draft ciders, the remaining third are farmhouse cideries. Farmhouse cider is the good stuff, and is known as "scrumpy" in Britain, where aprocryphal stories abound regarding how farmers manage to get so much "body" in their brew. As the cider press and fermenting vat are typically kept in a farm outbuilding or barn, stories about dead rats floating in the fermenting cider are quite credible. Urban legend, however, tells of a farmer who, keen to produce a prize-winning, full-bodied masterpiece, threw in a horse's head. Scrumpy is also known, for obvious reasons, as rough cider. If you're ever in a pub in England's cider country (the West Country in general, but particularly the counties of Gloucester and Somerset), expect to see old codgers taking their pints of rough and adding a shot of gin, which smoothes out the rough edges and enhances the overall fruitiness.

The three largest selling brands in the US are Woodchuck (made in Vermont), Seven Sisters Wild Horse (Idaho), and Cider Jack (Massachusetts), with two lesser-known brands, Ace and Hornsby's, both produced in California. The leading imported brands include Woodpecker and Strongbow (Bulmer's, UK) and Blackthorn (Taunton, UK). I'm not going to recommend any one of them here, but farmhouse cider and New England cider (which has a high alcohol content, up to about 8%) make the best snakebites.

There's no evidence of this in the US yet, but snakebite has been demonized in Britain. Increasingly over the last 20 or 30 years, pub landlords throughout the UK have refused to serve snakebite, and will give you a hostile glare just for ordering it. We have skinheads to thank for the popular misconception that snakebite turns you into some kind of evil baby-eating monster. Snakebite was once the tipple de rigeur of the shiny-headed, Doc-Marten-booted ones. There is no more horrendous entertainment than to go drinking with a gang of skinheads on a Friday night. Watch them as they drink ten pints of snakebite, then launch staggering into a frenzied skinhead moonstomp, punching the air and shouting "Oi, Oi, Oi" while smashing the place up before they disappear into the night for a spot of Paki-bashing. It's a shameful legacy all right. Hold it right there before you get all uppity about having skinhead friends who are not Nazis and racists, but who love kittens and go to church. Skinhead cultural history will be the subject of an article in a future issue of Fence.

Carlsberg Special Brew (very strong lager, about 8%, big favorite among British winos) and Bulmers 1080 (very strong cider, about 8%, another big favorite among British winos) are both hard to get in the US, but make a supremely toxic snakebite. The head whips up into a thick, oily souffle that appears to have been baked in the oven, while the swampy green-brown body looks like a mixture of chocolate milk and antifreeze. But beware, it's simply too strong. I once had three pints for lunch, and although I managed to evade arrest for urinating in public, I did black out on the train home and get robbed of my camera and leather jacket. You've been warned.



SNAKEBITE

The Original
Cider and Lager

Snakebite Black
The Original plus a shot of Blackcurrant

Guinness Snakebite
(a.k.a. Poor Man's Black Velvet)
Guinness and Cider

Red Devil
Snakebite Black plus a shot of Pernod

Anaconda
Good Ale (such as Theakston's) and Cider
Blackcurrant Optional

This bartenders' guide is provided as a public service by those drunks at FENCE magazine.

CHURCH KEYS & BEER SOAKED PISS AINTS

...is the title of the soon to be published collection of work by Texas white trash garage poet and literary messiah **William Bryan Massey III**. Here's a few excerpts..

CITY PEOPLE ARE JUST AS DUMB AS DUCK TAPE IS SMART

a friend of mine from the city called me the other day. He told me that he had just got back from camping out in the woods for the last two weeks. He told me that something weird had happened. He said that he had gottena tick in his belly botton and asked me what he should do about it. I told him, "first off your a stupid idiot goofy bastard moron any way cause you live in the city, i grew up in Johnson County and every time we went camping we would put a small strip of duck tape across our belly bottons so that kinda stupid shit wouldn't happen, but if you get one in there there's only one other way of getting him out. Lay down flat on a picnic table or something and have someone pour some kerosene, lighter fluid or if your hard core, some gasoline into your navel then let it sit till you count to 30 then lite it. If the fumes don't make him back out, then the heat will. trust me.

you can never go back home again

the tears fall like
sun off a full moon
filtering down
through a canopy
of over grown
oak
pecan
hackberry
and evergreens
thrust down the
remembering
on to white gravel
roads lined with
cedar post barb
wire
fences.

on one stretch there
hung the carcasses
of one hundred or
more wolves
foxes and
coyotes all in
different states
of decomposition.

a time line of the
captured unwanted
forgotten.

going on forever
and ever
hairpin
winding at an
uneven grade
turning this way
and that

just
out
of
my
reach.

GENUINE LIZARD

those people that sit around pissing and moaning all the time are those ones that ain't got no complete life. cause the ones of us that do have a complete life xdon't ain't got tha time to sit around and piss and moan, mainly cause were to godamn busy. doing things the RIGHT WAY.

*— william b. massey III

IN BAD TRAFFIC...ONCE MORE

i was sitting at a red light
today at about I:36 or so.
it was Io6 degrees
i was thinking about when
i got off work.
i wanted to grab a six pack
go home and fix me some
fried pork chops
w/cheese melted on top
a can of pork'n beans
and three or four pieces
of mrs. baird's . . . .
white bread & syrup.

i saw a sticker on tha bumper
of tha pick-up truck in front
of me
it said:

"ONLY A BITCH LIKE ME COULD
LOVE A BASTARD LIKE HIM"

i pulled up besides her then
looked over
damn
he might be a bastard alright
a drunk ass bastard cause that
was one of the ugliest muthas
that i have ever seen.

that bitch looked like the
Sea Hag off of Popeye slapped
up side tha head by
Alice tha Goon.

that shit made my optic
nerve
ache.

		#of copies
TEXAS BEER JESUS WHISKEY PUSSY....	$3.00	____
THE SISTER.....	$3.00	____
JAIL.....	$3.00	____
SLOW DEATH OF AN URBAN OUTCRY.....	$4.00	____
STAYING WITH GIRLS.....	$5.00	____
FLIES LAND ON MY KNEE & DRINK SWEAT.....	$5.00	____
PECKERWOOD SERENADE.....	$4.00	____
RHAPSODY OF A B-B-QED LIZARD.....	$4.00	____
POSTCARDS (pack of 20).....	$4.00	____

ALL ART WORK $5.00 a print
full color:
#Ic____ #2c____ #3c____ #4c____
indio ink drawings:
#Ib____ #2b____

PLEASE ALLOW 3to4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY feel free to send CASH/CHECK/MONEY ORDER payable to w.b. massey- orders outside of the U.S. of A. add $I.00 p&h

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

E-mail: genuinelizard@mailcity.com

www.anti-heroart.com

ARSE IMITATES LIFE

The last words (really) of Darth Brooks

I'm sure everyone who listens remembers where they were when they discovered "Roanoke's Modern Rock Station," Z101, had slunk off in the night like a $20 hooker with a $30 bottle of bourbon, only to be replaced with some soft-rock doppelganger. It was the crack of noon, and I had just got up and turned on the radio (not wanting to actually stop and pick out a CD – radio is good for that). I was greeted by The Little River Band. "Now that's alternative," I thought to myself, thinking mebbe that Don was having a Mountain Dew episode, or possibly that Joey had scraped a little too deep and was now just smoking wood. But it was much worse than that, as we would all come to find out. Everyone knows by now that our 101.5 had become the new sonic temple for the likes of Kenny G. and Michael Bolton. And chaos ensued. The station was flooded with calls, ex-intern Allyson Chains put up a website in protest and emailed the whole damn valley. As journalists, naturally we were all over this mess like a duck on a Junebug, hunting the newly unemployed jocks and badgering the station for answers. Before we actually got anywhere, however, the veil was lifted, and Z101 was returned from the antimatter universe where they were being held, along with that evil version of Spock with the little goatee. In following up the story, we were asked to just "leave it alone," and we agreed that nothing was to be gained from blowing everything "out of proportion," since the jocks were all back to work and the format was reinstated. They asked that they just be allowed to make their own statement.

The official Z101 statement was that they weren't making the numbers to generate enough advertising, so they had to move to an established format. They further went on to exclaim how thrilled they were with the amount of support the community gave them, and that they'd decided to stay after all. FENCE started a couple of months after Z101 first went on air. We were introduced to the crew just like everyone else, by who they were at Z101: Goofy but earnest Trent in the morning, and staccato Greg playing the cuss words and saying less overnight. In between was Don (who made us feel like high-school seniors, sneaking vodka and watching girls), Joey (who made us think it was college again, and he was just across the hall in a cloud of crazy incense), and Tori (oh, Tori, I would roast a yak for her supper!). In the field was Matt Steele, named like, acting like, and even resembling a porn star. We were certainly looking forward to the party. If this is starting to sound like a eulogy, mebbe it kinda is. Stick with me.

FENCE is produced with ad revenue. To be as accessible as possible, FENCE is a free magazine. So we, like Z101, depend on the support of our community, and in exchange we hope to give everyone their money's worth, so to speak. When we approached Z101 about ad space, or even trading ads in FENCE for a bit of air time, we were told that not only did Z101 have nothing to gain by advertising in FENCE, but FENCE couldn't afford Z101 air time, and thank you very much.

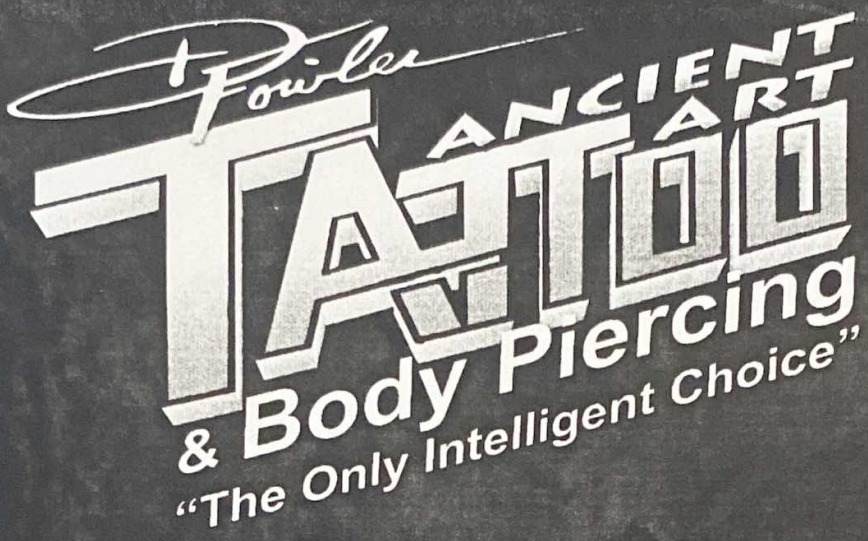
To grow, you have to understand and adapt to your environment, and such hubris from the same station that almost went tits-up because of lack of support is astonishing. It also means that Z101 is headed for the dirt nap. This has nothing to do with the jocks, of course, who roll merrily along being as nice as can be every day. To the public, they are the station.

Now, in complete contrast, we have WROV, the bastion of solid, proven rock music in this town, right or wrong. I would hasten a guess that the majority of FENCE readers are not regular WROV listeners, even though WROV is everywhere you turn in this town. When FENCE heard from WROV, it was because of comments made in a story last issue. On a pure burst of ballage, we asked 'ROV if they might wanna buy an ad. When this multithousand-watt radio bohemoth cast its gaze on me and asked what WROV would gain by advertising in our little "underground magazine," I answered honestly: "It might make a handful of people who have otherwise stereotyped your station start looking at you as being more than just your playlist – Content Over Plot."

Now, all this doesn't mean there's a bunch of new Aerosmith fans in the valley, but it does means there's a bit less 'us and them." And that ain't so bad, dammit.

Radio Killed the Laserprint Star...

After the appropriation of the monicker 'Darth Brooks' by a popular morning radio show, and it's subsequent use in a series of 'redneck jedi' skits, i have decided that i just don't wanna be associated with that name anymore. waah. Just remember, you heard it here first, folks. From this point on Darth Brooks, of FENCE magazine is now: Wile E. Peyote. Thank you. yes, thank you.



Here at Danny's Ancient Art Tattoo Studios, a great deal of our time and energy is spent bringing you the latest in advanced tattooing and body piercing. We offer the safest, cleanest and friendliest environment. State health and safety training and proper autoclave sterilization insure your protection. Danny's Ancient Art Tattoo appreciates your business. As a satisfied customer, we hope you will pass your experience on to others. We will continue to bring you the finest in the growing world of tattoos and body piercing. That's why we're...
"The Only Intelligent Choice!"

This Coupon Good At
ROANOKE
Studio only

Present this ad for

10% OFF

All tattoos over $75

All body piercings over $60

Call for details

Blacksburg, VA:
(540)951-0447

Roanoke, VA:
(540)774-0819

Charleston, WV:
(304)925-8240

SAFE AS MILK

RECORDS

FUN PAGE

As the Millennium approaches we thought we'd take a look back to the salad days in the...

Safe As Milk Photo Album

'King' stops by for our first birthday - May 1

bring us your used LPs CDs Tapes & Videos - Cash or Credit

New & used vinyl
used CDs Tapes & Videos

Safe As Milk
20 kirk ave
downtown roanoke
10-9 mon-sat
12-6 sun
982-7789